Yorkshire in Olden Times

William Andrews, F.R.H.S.

YORKSHIRE IN OLDEN TIMES.

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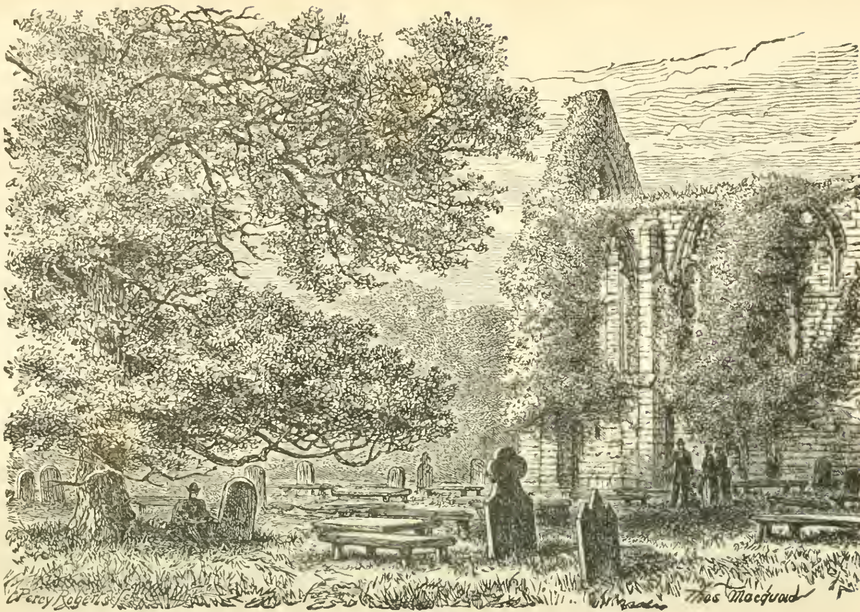

BOLTON ABBEY.

Yorkshire in Olden Times

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PREFACE.

THE following papers are re-printed from the *Wakefield Free Press* and other journals. The articles, when first published in the columns of the newspapers, met with such favour as to induce me to believe that, if brought together in a volume, they would not be deemed an unwelcome contribution to Yorkshire Literature

WILLIAM ANDREWS.

Hull Literary Club,
June 1st, 1890

An Outline History of Yorkshire

At the earliest period of which we have any record in ancient history, what is now the County of York was occupied by a tribe of British Celts, whom Tacitus calls Brigantes, a Cymric name which appears to have been derived from the Gaelic *braighe*, "high land." They were not confined to Yorkshire, however, but inhabited all the north of England, from sea to sea, and from the Humber to the Tweed. Traces of their occupation of the county have been found in recent times, all over the Wolds, in excavations and graves, from which rude pottery and their flint weapons and implements have frequently been exhumed. Nothing is known of the history of this primitive race of Yorkshiremen prior to the time, nearly a century after the southern and central portions of England had been subdued by the Romans, when the imperial legions marched in, under Ostorious Scapula, under the pretext of repressing internal disorder. The Brigantes were not then conquered, but remained independent nearly twenty years longer. The greater part of their territory was then brought under subjection to the Roman Emperors by Petilius Cerealis, and in the year 78 their conquest was completed by Agricola. This part of England was then constituted a province of the empire under the name of Maxima Cæsariensis, and the seat of government fixed at York, then called Eboracum.

THE ROMANS IN YORKSHIRE

Under the Roman rule, roads were made through the province, permanent camps formed, and towns built, in which all the arts and refinements of Roman civilisation were soon introduced. Eboracum, in particular, had its temples and palaces, its amphitheatre and baths, its forts and walls, of which latter there yet remains the multangular tower in the grounds of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society. Statues, busts, vases, sarcophagi, and coins of this period have at various times been found and have added to our limited knowledge of the time when a Roman legion garrisoned the city, and the Roman Emperors rested within its walls when they occasionally visited this remote part of their extensive dominions. Two Emperors, Severus and Constantius, died at Eboracum, and Constantine was there proclaimed Emperor on the death of his father. On the withdrawal of the Roman legions from Britain, consequent on the incursions of the Goths into Italy, the history of Yorkshire becomes obscure, and the materials for its narration are very scanty. We know, however, that the Scots broke down the northern wall, which had been constructed under the Roman rule as a bulwark against their raids, and ravaged the country, until they were routed and driven out by the Saxons.

YORKSHIRE UNDER THE HEPTARCHY.

It was nearly a century after the first landing of the Saxons in England that Ida, a chief of that bold, enterprising race, disembarked with his hardy followers at Flamborough, and, after a protracted struggle with the Brigantes, over-ran and subdued all the country between the Humber and the Tweed. He was followed by his kinsman Ella, who sailed up the Humber, and landed a little above Hull, in a district where his name has been preserved in the villages of West Ella, Kirk Ella, Ellerby, Elloughton, and Ellerker. Ida had scarcely established himself in the old Brigantian kingdom when he had to defend it against Ella, by whom he was ultimately forced to vacate all the country between the Humber and the Tees. Thus were formed the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms of Deira and Bernicia, the former comprehending Yorkshire and the latter Durham and Northumberland. Under Ella's son and successor, Edwin, these two kingdoms were, by the aid of Redwald, King of East Anglia, united by conquest under the name of Northumbria. Edwin married a Christian princess named Ethelburga, and by her persuasions and the preaching of the Roman monk Paulinus he was converted to his wife's faith. The great temple of Woden at Godmandingham was thereupon demolished, and Edwin founded at York a Christian church, the precursor of the present Minster. But Penda, King of Mercia, who adhered to the old faith, and had made a vow to root out the new religion, invaded Northumbria, in conjunction with Cadwalla, King of Wales, and overthrew Edwin's army in the battle of Heathfield. Edwin was slain in the conflict, and for the time Christianity was blotted out. Northumbria again became divided into two kingdoms, and a fierce though desultory war was carried on between their kings and the Mercian invaders until Penda was slain in a battle with the Bernicians. Oswy, King of the northern kingdom, then turned his arms against Oswin, King of Deira, after whose foul murder he became ruler of all Northumbria.

INCURSIONS OF THE DANES.

Towards the end of the eighth century, by which time the kingdoms of the Heptarchy had become united under Egbert, King of Wessex, the eastern coast of England began to be visited and ravaged by rovers from the islands of the Baltic and the shores of Jutland. The fleets of these "sea kings" appeared off the Yorkshire coast, or sailed up the Humber, again and again, plundering the monasteries and then putting to sea until in 867 a larger force of Danes than had yet landed marched upon York and inflicted upon the Northumbrians a severe defeat. Twelve years later these invaders over-ran and subdued the greater part of Yorkshire and made a permanent settlement. Anlaf, their chief, set up a Danish kingdom in Northumbria, but he was overthrown and expelled by Athelstan, and thereupon took refuge in Scotland. Constantine, king of that country, invaded the northern counties in order to restore him, but the Scots were defeated by Athelstan, who pursued them beyond the Tweed and ravaged their country. It is recorded that the English monarch, on his march northward, stopped at Beverley, where he deposited his sword on the altar of the Minster, promising great gifts to the church in the event of his being victorious, and was permitted to carry with him the banner of St John, under which he won the battle. He redeemed his pledge by granting important privileges to the church and town of Beverley, and also to York. There has been much controversy as to the place at which this battle, called Brunanburgh, was fought, and the point is still in dispute, and will probably never be determined. Various localities have been named by different writers, the balance of evidence being in favour of one or other of two localities, namely, Little Weighton, near Beverley, and the vicinity of Bamborough Castle, in Northumberland. Antiquaries have yet to decide upon the respective claims of these two places.

WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR IN YORKSHIRE.

When Canute, King of Denmark, became King of England, he assigned Northumbria to a chief named Eric, and from that time until the Norman Conquest the country was governed by earls, with vice-regal authority, the most notable of these dignitaries being Tosti, of whom a remarkable record exists at Kirkdale in an Anglo-Saxon inscription on the sun-dial at the church, and who, being exiled in 1065, fell in the battle of Stamford Bridge, fighting on the side of Harald, King of Norway. Harald was banqueting at York, on the day after this battle, when he heard of the landing of William, Duke of Normandy, with a large army, on the coast of Sussex, and immediately proceeded southward by forced marches. The result is well known. It was not until the summer of 1068, however, that William led his victorious Normans northward, and, having captured York, built a castle there, probably on the site of an earlier work. Beyond this city, Northumbria was still unconquered, and Norman garrisons were accordingly placed in the castle and in a fort on Baile Hill, on the opposite side of the Ouse. In the following year a combined force of Danes and Northumbrians, led by the sons of Sweyn, King of Denmark, Earl Cospatric, and Edgar Atheling, made its appearance before York, attacked and captured the castles, while the city, having been fired by the Normans, was in flames. William was so enraged when the news of this affair reached him that he marched in hot haste into Yorkshire, and ravaged the whole country between the Humber and the Tyne. Beverley alone escaped his destroying hand. The land was untilled that year, and a terrible famine was the result. After the country had recovered from the loss and suffering of that spoliation, the Norman lords to whom William had given estates in Yorkshire—the Percies, Mowbrays, Lacies, and Cliffords—built castles and founded churches and monasteries, on the sites of those which had been destroyed. Whitby Abbey and St. Mary's, at York, were refounded by some Benedictines from Evesham, however, and it was not until the twelfth century that the great monastic houses were founded for which Yorkshire afterwards became famous, and the ruins of which remain to attest their former magnificence. Thurstan, Archbishop of York from 1119 to 1140, was a great patron of the Cistercian order, whose first house in this country, Rievaulx, was founded in 1131

The splendid Abbey of Fountains also owed its foundation to his influence and help.

THE BATTLE OF THE STANDARD.

The most important event in Yorkshire history subsequent to the Norman Conquest occurred in the reign of Stephen, when David, King of Scotland, invaded England in support of his niece, the Empress Matilda of Germany, daughter of Henry I., and was met near Northallerton by an English army, headed by Archbishop Thurstan, and compelled to retreat with the loss of 11,000 men. The doughty deeds of the legendary Robin Hood and his "merrie men," the outlaws of Sherwood Forest, may be dismissed as apocryphal, whatever regret may be felt by the admirers of Scott's splendid romance of "Ivanhoe" at the dissociation of the bold archer from the scenes around which the novelist has thrown the spell of his genius. After the battle of the Standard, the next actual occurrence of importance in the history of the county was the foray of the Scots, under the Black Douglas, in 1322, when the Earl of Richmond was taken prisoner in a skirmish among the hills near Byland, and Edward II. was forced to beat a hasty retreat from the neighbourhood. In the same year the Earl of Lancaster raised an insurrection in Yorkshire against the king, on account of the privileges and benefits bestowed on his unworthy favourite, Piers Gaveston, whom he captured in Scarborough Castle, and beheaded on Blacklow Hill, in Warwickshire. Gaveston being succeeded in the royal favour by the De Spencers, the Earl of Lancaster again took up arms, but was defeated and taken prisoner at Boroughbridge, and executed at Pontefract.

THE WARS OF THE ROSES.

It was in Yorkshire, at a later date, that the first blow was struck in the long strife between the Yorkist and Lancastrian branches of the Plantagenet dynasty, when Henry, the son of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, returned from exile with an army, and landed at Ravenspurn to tear the crown from the head of his youthful cousin, Richard II. The ancient cross at Hedon is said to have been originally erected at Ravenser, or Ravenspurn, near Kilnsea, to commemorate this event. Richard, after his deposition, was taken successively to Leeds, Pickering, Knaresborough, and Pontefract, where, in the Castle, he was cruelly put to death, though the precise manner in which the tragedy was enacted is not certainly known. Out of this usurpation of the throne by Henry arose the long and terrible "War of the Roses," in the course of which were fought the battle of Wakefield in 1460, when Richard, Duke of York, was slain, and the decisive battle of Towton, in the following year, the result of which restored the crown to the rightful branch.

THE PILGRIMAGE OF GRACE.

The Reformation gave rise, in the next century, to very serious disturbances in Yorkshire, having for their object the restoration of the Romish Church and the re-establishment of the monasteries which had been dissolved by Henry VIII., but owing much of their support from the people to the discontent which was excited by the enclosure of commons and the distress arising from the withdrawal of the alms bestowed at the monasteries upon the indigent. The movement known as "the Pilgrimage of Grace" commenced in Lincolnshire, where it was soon suppressed; but a Yorkshire gentleman named Aske, who had been seized by the insurgents, and compelled to swear to support their cause, found on his return home that all Yorkshire was in a ferment, owing to a letter bearing his signature having been circulated through the county, calling upon the people to take arms in defence of the old religion. Lord D'Arcy, a nobleman of great influence in the East Riding, was secretly in favour of the movement, and assisted the insurgents without openly committing himself to their cause. A rising took place, the rendezvous being Market Weighton Common, where Aske was nominated to the chief command; and the insurgents, being joined by Sir Thomas Percy, brother of the Earl of Northumberland, marched upon York, where the gates were at once opened to them. Thence they proceeded to Pontefract, where Lord D'Arcy surrendered the castle to them, and joined them, with his small garrison. The Archbishop of York openly embraced their cause at the same time, and Hull was soon in their hands, and Skipton Castle invested.

The insurrection gained ground rapidly. All the nobility and gentry of the north, except the Cliffords, Dacres, and Musgraves, threw themselves into it, and the insurgent army moved from Pontefract towards Don caster, in three divisions. The Earl of Shrewsbury had, in the meantime, advanced northward with the royal forces, and reached the Don, which he was prevented from crossing by its swollen condition, it being then the latter end of October. A herald who was sent to Aske by the earl was informed that it was the intention of the insurgents "to go to London on pilgrimage to the King's Highness, there to have all the vile blood of his council put from him, and all the noble blood set up again, and also the faith of Christ and his laws to be kept, and full restitution to Christ's Church of all wrongs done unto it; and also the commonalty to be used as they should be." Other communications passed between Shrewsbury and Aske, and then a conference took place between them, others of each party being present, on the bridge at Doncaster. It was agreed that Sir Robert Bowes and Sir Ralph Ellerker should present the demands of the insurgents to the King, the Duke of Norfolk undertaking to personally escort them, and that in the meantime the musters on both sides should be disbanded. The envoys were detained a fortnight, and Yorkshire continued in a disturbed state. Skipton Castle held out successfully, but the delay of the King's reply excited the minds of the people of the disaffected districts, and it began to be feared that the leaders would become impatient, and cross the Humber. Aske called the disbanded insurgents to his banners again, and a council of notables and the clergy was convened at Pontefract. Aske presided over an assembly of 34 nobles and knights in the great hall of the castle, and the Archbishop of York over a convocation of the northern clergy in the church. The prelate, though thus giving moral support to the rebellion, now declared that he had joined the insurgents under constraint, and pronounced the assembly unlawful and the movement treasonable. This declaration caused so much exasperation that he was dragged from the pulpit, and would have been killed if he had not been rescued by friendly hands from his assailants. After he had left the church, the assembled clergy drew up a series of articles condemnatory of everything that had been done by the reformers of the Church.

The King was, in the meantime, acting in a very wily manner. He had received the deputation graciously, won them over from the insurgent cause, and then given them letters to others of the rebel leaders with the same object. Commissioners from Henry were sent to Doncaster with what Aske and the other leaders of the rebellion understood as the concession of all their demands. All, however, that was really promised was a general pardon, the assembling of a Parliament at York in the following summer, and the institution of a Northern Council, which was to sit at York, under the presidency of the Duke of Norfolk. Aske was invited to London by the King, by whom he was well received; but on his return to Yorkshire he found the people excited by their doubts as to the King's intentions, and he wrote to Henry, setting forth the situation, and intimating plainly that a second outbreak might be expected. His anticipations were fulfilled, another rising taking place under Sir Francis Bigot, but the only effect, so well had the King taken his measures, was the affording of a pretext for the withdrawal of the promised concessions and the issue of orders for the punishment of all offences committed subsequently to the Doncaster conference. Martial law was proclaimed, and arrests took place throughout the northern counties. Seventy-four persons, including many priests and monks, were hanged, and many more imprisoned. Aske, Lord

D'Arcy, and Sir Robert Constable were arrested and sent to the Tower, but whether on account of their participation in the rebellion, or on the charge of treasonable correspondence with Cardinal Pole, is uncertain, all political trials of that period being more or less secret, and political executions stamped with the odium of judicial murders. They were all executed—Aske at York, D'Arcy in London, and Constable at Hull.

The Northern Council was duly established, and had its head-quarters at York for more than a century. It had a jurisdiction in all cases of riot and conspiracy, not only in Yorkshire, but also in Durham, Northumberland, Cumberland, and Westmoreland, and a limited jurisdiction in civil cases. It was abolished by the Long Parliament, at the same time as the arbitrary Court of Star Chamber.

ANOTHER CATHOLIC CONSPIRACY.

Thirty years after "the Pilgrimage of Grace," Yorkshire and other northern counties were agitated by rumours of the intended marriage of the Queen of Scotland with the Duke of Norfolk, with the result of new combinations and conspiracies, the objects of which were said to be the liberation of the former, her recognition as heir to the English crown, and the restoration of the old religion. In October, 1569, the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, and many other northern gentlemen, assembled at Topcliffe, one of the mansions of the first-named nobleman, in the expectation of receiving intelligence of a rising in the eastern counties. Lord Burleigh had succeeded, however, in detaching the Duke of Norfolk from the movement, and a letter was sent to Topcliffe by the latter, begging the conspirators not to move, as an outbreak would be the signal for his trial and execution. Their plans had not been well concealed, however, and the two earls received the Queen's commands to present themselves at Court. They refused to obey, and large bodies of armed insurgents assembled at Raby, and marched to Durham under the old banners of the Pilgrimage of Grace. From Durham they moved southward to Darlington, increasing in numerical strength as they went, and everywhere openly proclaiming their intention to restore "the ancient and catholic faith." The Earl of Sussex, who was then at York as President of the Council, had not a sufficient force at hand to arrest their progress, and they marched on to Ripon, Knaresborough, and Tadcaster, intending to proceed to Tutbury, in Staffordshire, where the Queen of Scotland was then confined in the castle, release her, and march on to London. At Tadcaster they learned that Mary had been hastily removed to Coventry, and thereupon paused to consider the new situation thus created. They were in communication with the Duke of Alva, who would not move to their support until

Mary was at liberty, and many of the Catholic gentry were not willing to move without the help of Spain. After resting a few days at Tadcaster, the rebels retreated northward, therefore, and by the end of November were broken up into detached bands.

The Earl of Northumberland returned to Durham. The Earl of Westmoreland joined Sir George Bowes, who, with a small following, had entrenched himself before Barnard Castle. After a few days' siege, Bowes surrendered, and Westmoreland fled to Raby. Dacres, of Naworth, had withdrawn from the movement, and was now at Carlisle. The royal forces advanced northwards, and the two earls, with their wives and a remnant of their followers, fled across the border into Scotland. There, for a time, they found a refuge among the lawless moss-troopers. Westmoreland, the two countesses, Norton of Norton Conyers, and his two sons, ultimately succeeded in quitting the country and crossing the sea to Flanders. Northumberland was less fortunate, being captured by stratagem, given up to the Regent Murray, and imprisoned three years in Lochlevin Castle, in the rooms which had been occupied by Mary. He was then delivered to Elizabeth, and executed at York. Though the insurrection had been almost bloodless, the vengeance of Elizabeth fell heavily on all who were known to have taken part in it.

Domiciliary visits all over the disaffected districts on the same night were made, and thousands of persons arrested, of whom between six and seven hundred were summarily executed in the towns through which the insurgents had marched. These were all farmers, artisans, and labourers. Eleven men of higher social position were tried at York, and four of them were hanged, while the property of the others was declared forfeited to the Crown.

THE GREAT CIVIL WAR.

Yorkshire and Yorkshiremen figured conspicuously in the events of the great civil war of the next century. In 1640 Charles I. was at York, preparing to march with an army into Scotland, then in open revolt against Archbishop Laud's attempt to impose Episcopacy and the English liturgy upon the people. The Scotch were first in the field. They crossed the Tweed, and advanced towards the Tees. Charles convened a council of peers at York, and by their advice Parliament—the famous Long Parliament—was assembled. Royal commissioners went to Ripon to negotiate with the Scotch leaders, but without effect. The contest between the King and the House of Commons soon drew to a head, and Charles again left London for York, where he was lodged in the mansion now known as the Manor House, which had been built with a portion of the materials of the ruined abbey of St. Mary. The civil war broke out soon afterwards, the first act of rebellion being the closing of the gates of Hull against the King by Sir John Hotham. Yorkshire was, speaking generally, well disposed to the royal cause, but the Fairfaxes were active and energetic on the side of the Parliament, and the forces of the Marquis of Newcastle suffered serious losses from them, and were compelled to abandon the siege of Hull. The siege of York, whither Newcastle proceeded after this failure, followed, and Prince Rupert was summoned from Lancashire to its relief. The Parliamentarians moved from the city to intercept him, and took up a commanding position for that purpose on Marston Moor. The prince succeeded by a flank movement in reaching York, however, and the Parliamentary generals, on learning that he had entered the city, determined to march southward, but abandoned that intention on being informed that Rupert was moving from York to attack them. They faced about, occupied the rising ground between Marston and Tockwith, and gave battle to the royal forces there on the 2nd July, 1644. Then ensued, says Carlyle, "the most enormous hurly-burly of fire and smoke, and steel flashings, and death tumult, ever seen in those regions." The result is known. The royalists were completely routed, and fled along the side of Wilstrop Wood, pursued by the Parliamentary cavalry to within a mile of York.

York surrendered on honourable conditions, and the royal cause might from that time have been considered lost. Pontefract and Scarborough still held out for the King, and were the last strongholds to be surrendered. Scarborough surrendered in July, 1645, but in 1648 Colonel Boynton, who was then governor of the castle, declared for the King. and the town sustained a second siege, from August to December, when Boynton was forced to surrender. Pontefract held out until after the execution of the King, when the garrison immediately proclaimed Charles II. ; and did not surrender until its original 500 defenders had been reduced by the casualties of war to 100.

With the close of the great civil war the history of the olden time in Yorkshire reaches its natural conclusion. The incidents of the Plantagenet and Tudor periods, which have furnished the ground-work of so many delightful works of fiction, and which are so closely associated with the era during which the old feudal system was in operation, became impossible under the altered conditions which came into operation during the first half of the seventeenth century. The state of society, the amusements of the people, the manners and customs of all classes, underwent a corresponding change, and everything showed that the "good old times," as they have been called, had passed away, never to return.

THOMAS FROST.

The Cow Devil.

A LEGEND OF CRAVEN.

A month could scarcely be better spent in summer or autumn, than in Upper Wharfedale, in Craven, on the skirts of Pennygant and Whernside, by the geologist, the lover of wild nature, the archaeologist, or the student of folklore. The scenery of that Pennine region is somewhat peculiar in its character, resembling neither that of the Lake district, the Peak, Wales, or the Highlands of Scotland. It presents a confused heap of rocks and mountains, raised from eighteen hundred to three thousand feet above the sea, alternating with open moors, and feeding innumerable rivulets, which come tumbling down more or less precipitately over masses of boulders from the springs in which they originate, and unite at the openings of deep water-worn cloughs, which by-and-by expand into narrow grassy valleys, the upland slopes of which are feathered with natural woods of ash, intermixed with birch, oak, beech, and maple, commonly called sycamore. The mountain or carboniferous limestone which forms the basis of the district, presents in many places bold bluff precipices and escarpments, and is frequently found pierced by large natural caverns. One of the most remarkable of these escarpments is Kilnsey Crag, near the village of that name, which is about 160 feet high, and extends nearly half-a-mile along the valley. It is greatly worn at its base, just like cliffs on the sea coast that are continually exposed to the dashing of the waves; and there can be no doubt that Wharfedale was once an arm of the sea, and this crag a sea cliff on which the waves broke for ages. Two miles north-west of Kilnsey, and opposite the village of Hawkswick, there is an interesting cavern, called Dowkabottom Cave; it is situated on a lofty plateau of the Kilnsey range of crags, 1,250 feet above the sea, and is of considerable extent. Some twenty years ago, a great quantity of bone was discovered in it, consisting of the skulls and jaw-bones of wild dogs and wolves, mingled with bones of deer, sheep, oxen, horses, etc. There were likewise traces of human habitation, such as spear heads, glass and shell ornaments, clasps or buckles, and fragments of pottery, besides coins of several of the Roman Emperors—many of them clumsy forgeries, showing that the coiner was afoot in the third and fourth centuries of our era, justifying the law of the Emperor Constantine, by which such offenders were declared guilty of high treason, and condemned to be burnt alive. On the hill above the cavern grows the mountain avens (Dryas octo petala), a rare plant, which is found native only on the highest mountains and flowers in June. In one of the most romantic parts of the district, nearly opposite the village of Coniston, stood, some seventy years ago, an old and venerable mansion, overlooking the Wharfe, rolling rapidly past over a rocky channel, as if hurrying down to the Strid, ten miles below, where the force of the hill floods, operating for untold ages, has worn in the living rock so narrow and deep a channel that it may be crossed by a single stride, and in endeavouring to bound across which the only son of the Lady Alice de Kommile, Wordsworth's "Noble boy of Egremond," lamentably perished, causing, as tradition tells, an "endless sorrow," to his fond mother, which prompted her to found and endow Bolton Abbey. Higher up the valley is seen the place where the Skirfare or Lytton Beck joins the Wharfe, and the dales divide, while in the distance the eye is forcibly attracted by the lofty hills, amongst which the mist-encircled Whernside raises its towering head. A mansion in so lovely a situation might have been thought a desirable residence for any gentleman of fortue, who wished to retire from the gay scenes of fashionable life, and live in seclusion and solitude; but this house had been for many years without a tenant, not because it was not otherwise eligible, but because it was reputed to be haunted. Strange and unaccountable noises were heard within it, lights were beheld in the windows, and figures dressed in uncouth guise appeared to the view of the horrified midnight wanderer. This was not deemed in the least degree surprising by the simple-minded natives of Wharfedale, unsophisticated as they were in the days of our grandmothers. Among the old people, even yet, one finds the belief in ghosts, fairies and witches, which was once universal, stubbornly lingering. The bleak barren hills, stupendous crags, gloomy caves, mountain cataracts, and dreadful thunder and snowstorms seem to have a natural tendency to create and foster superstition, and to people the depths of every glen and the interior of every mountain with supernatural beings, tricksy or malign. The story went that the old mansion house referred to had been inhabited, a long time before, by a very wicked man learned in the law, who used his skill in chicanery, to outwit, fleece, and villainously oppress and rob his neighbours, and particularly to cheat his clients, every one of whom had reason in the end to curse the day they employed him. He was, however, it seems, fond of a somewhat less objectionable or cruel sport, being a keen fox hunter, and after his death, was believed to "come back" to enjoy it, and also to hold nightly carousals with ghosts of like propensities, which accounted for the strange sights the people used to see. Moreover, the gang were wont to issue forth about midnight to engage in a grand hunt through the grounds surrounding the house. Here the old Skin-'em-alive, dressed in his wig and gown, and mounted on a skeleton horse, hunted nightly in company with his infernal majesty, who appeared in the shape of a huge monster caparisoned with a pair of horns, and attended by an innumerable pack of hell-dogs. Persons who professed to have been spectators of the hunt, and who averred that they could not be mistaken about it, said the devil blew his horn in a clear and masterly manner, and shouted "Tally ho! as well as the best huntsman in Craven; but they did not all agree as to the object of the hunt, some maintaining that the old lawyer was really the hunted party, and that he well deserved to be so for the way he had hunted most people when alive. Amongst those few inhabitants who laughed this legend to scorn, there flourished, about the end of the last century, a man whose name has been handed down to us as William Robinson. Bill was one of those characters, who, to use a common phrase, feared neither God nor Devil, being a regular attendant at the ale house in Kilnsey, and a most notorious and incorrigible poacher. Once on a dark autumnal night, Will, pursuing his unlawful vocations, was fearlessly passing through the grounds around the haunted house, breaking down the hedges and climbing the walls that opposed his progress. As he was leaping from the top of one of the walls into the next field, he fell upon something which was very rough. What it was he knew not, but up it rose and took off with him on its back at a merry trot. Bill was considering in whose power he was, when the old legend rushed upon his memory, and he who had so often ridiculed the story, believed himself mounted on the old enemy of the wicked lawyer, and this belief was confirmed by feeling that his steed had a pair of horns. The affrighted poacher gave himself up as lost, called on all the persons of the Trinity, and invoked the aid of the Evangelists and all the hierarchy, vowing, if he might be spared a little longer, to leave off poaching, and every other evil practice. His prayers finished, a thought occurred that by freeing himself from the devil's back by a fall, he might have some chance of escaping. He was about to put this project into execution, when, turning round, he espied a host of fiends scampering after him. The sight made him determine to hold fast to the devil, thinking it was better to be under the control of the master than in the power of his servants. The devil having carried him round and round the field, at length approached the Wharfe, and conveyed him safely across the stream. Here he became perfectly insensible, and, as he is said to have related the story, had not the slightest remembrance of what happened. When he recovered from his stupor, he found himself lying in the midst of a pasture field; instead of the roaring of the Styx, he heard the purling of the Wharfe; the only flame he beheld was the sun rising over the eastern hills; and the only fiend near him was a small Scotch kyloe cow. That cow explained the night's adventure,—the animal, in order to shelter itself from the cold, had lain down to rest close beside the wall, and being suddenly startled by Bill's leaping on to its back, had acted in the manner described; and what his heated imagination magnified into fiends was only the rest of the herd. It was not in the nature of the man to keep his strange adventure a secret. It became the talk of the village for more than the proverbial nine days, and many a hearty laugh was raised at Bill's expense. The lads everlastingly pestered him by calling out when he passed, "Cow-Devil!"; and it seemed as if he was nevet to hear the end of it. Fortunately, however, a perfervid revival preacher happened to visit the neighbourhood, and was so lucky as to convert several of the people, among whom was our hero, who, to use Burns's expression, in his "Address to the Deil," "took a thought and mended." He accordingly not only left off poaching, but gave up frequenting the public house He joined himself to the Methodists, and attended camp meetings In due course he became a class-leader, a local, and at last a travelling preacher; and the feelings of reverence and respect with which he came to be regarded flung into the dim and distant background the memory of his nocturnal ride on the Highland Cow's back.

William Brockie.

The First Anglo-Saxon Poet.

Much is said in these days of poets and poetry. The fashion is to talk of our great writers, living or recent; to discuss their merits and to analyze their productions. To students is left the task or pleasure of diving into the remote past. Almost exclusively they possess a monopoly of the enjoyment accruing to those who dig deep into the wealth of English literature produced in by-gone days. Little is known of the various stages through which the art of poetry has passed in its gradual development to that state of cultured perfection to which it has attained in modern times. The advance of civilization, and the extension of the Commercial spirit in these islands, have all but stifled an art which at one time was a common acquisition of the people. The opinion expressed by Lord Macaulay is one with which we can heartily agree:—he says "that as civilization advances, poetry almost necessarily declines." Far back in the history of our country, and long before the institution of written language, there was a kind of "floating literature" in this land, which was better known to the great bulk of the people than modern literature is known to their modern prototypes. Anything that excited the imagination of our forefathers was readily expressed in the language of song. It was customary for the people frequently to assemble themselves together to listen to the breathings of their travelling minstrels. The common people were in the habit of constantly expressing themselves in impromptu song. At the places of public resort, the public-house or other place, it was the exception rather than the rule to find one who was not ready to express himself or herself in this way. Any exhibition of exceptional courage or great daring was sure to secure for the hero a place in the singing of the time. Emulation was inspired, and a sense of duty enforced in this way, insomuch that men were willing to run great risk and attempt great deeds; they were willing to fight gloriously in battle, and die for their country, knowing that their names would be revered by their survivors and posterity, and that they would be the subject of song. Doubtless there were many of these singers who from year to year and generation to generation handed on their songs; each generation adding new matter. But of this profusion but little comes down to us; that little, however, is sufficient evidence to show of what stuff our Saxon forefathers were made, The earliest poetry of which we have any authentic record is that of Cædmon, and for this reason he is styled the first Anglo-Saxon poet. Not much is known of him. He is surrounded by a halo of what appears to-day very much like tradition, if not of superstition. Notwithstanding this, his name is worth preserving, and his thoughts are worth knowing, not only on account of the merit he may have in himself, or for the glimpse of bye-gone times which his poetry gives us, but because he was a good man and a Yorkshireman. I have said that in these early days the exception was to find one ungifted with the power of song. Yet tradition tells us that Cædmon, until very late in life, considered himself one of the exception. It was a great grief to him that he was unable to join with his friends and companions in singing the praises of their heroes. This inability often led him in soreness of heart to leave the cheerful company and wander away to hide himself and mourn over his defect. He was born and lived in a locality which was full of nature's beauties and his daily vocation brought him under the inspiring influence of nature in its wildest and grandest aspects. He was a shepherd, we are told, and one can well imagine that with the opportunities he had he would frequently gaze with wondrous eyes on the lofty heights, the rugged rocks, the turbulent sea, and the star-spangled heavens; his mind being filled with thoughts grand and marvellous, yet without the ability to give them tongue. It is not unreasonable to suppose that often in the stilly night, as he gazed on the heavens, his heart would go out to the Creator for the gift of song. And at last the answer came. We are told by Venerable Bede, that on one occasion Cædmon formed one of a party of friends assembled at a house of one of their number. They travelled from the country round, some on foot, others on horseback and in carts. The festivities were to last more than a day, and in those unsettled times it was necessary to keep careful watch over moveable property alive or dead. This watching was done in turns. On this occasion, during the usual entertainment, as the harp passed from hand to hand, each contributing his quota to the common enjoyment, Cædmon felt most keenly his deficiency. As nearer approached the instrument, he felt shame that where all could do so well he could do nothing at all, so he left the hall to bear his sorrow alone. In the agony of his mental pain he threw himself on the ground, and was soon relieved by "tired nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep." His sleep was restful and pleasant, for he had a sweet vision. One came to him and said, "Cædmon sing." He replied, "I cannot sing, and it was for this reason I left the hall." But, answered his visitor, "You must sing to me," and, yielding to the strange presence in the inspiration of the moment, he said, "What shall I sing?" He was told "to sing the origin of creatures." Cædmon then began to sing verses in praise of his great Creator, "Now we ought to praise the author of the Heavenly Kingdom, the power of the Creator and His counsel, the deeds of the Father of Glory: how He, though the Eternal God, became the author of marvels; Omnipotent Guardian, who created for the sons of men, first, heaven for their roof, and then the earth." This is the sense though not the exact words of what he sang. It must be admitted that for those rude ages, and at a period so near to the introduction of Christianity into this country, these are wondrous sentiments. When Cædmon awoke he was rejoiced to find himself possessed of a new and marvellous power He remembered the lines he had composed in his sleep, and soon added others. This might be and probably was, only the springing into activity of a power which had long been dormant. Cædmon himself looked upon it as a direct command from heaven. The grandeur of his subject matter, and the superior ability shown after such long silence, seems to have impressed his friends with a similar idea. He was living in the neighbourhood of a monastery at Whitby, presided over by the Abbess Hilda. This pious lady was soon made acquainted with the wonderful developement of the gift of song in Cædmon, and he had an interview with the lady, who tested his new found power by relating to him portions of Scripture history, and asked him to change it into poetry. This he speedily did, greatly to the delight of all good people. All were then ready to believe that he had received a Divine inspiration, and henceforth he was allowed to devote his life and talents to the service of his Creator. He took up his abode in the religious house, and diligently and prayerfully studied the Scriptures and improved his gift. Here he lived a calm and peaceful life, devoting the remainder of his days to the glory of God. He left behind him the sweet savour of a pious life and his words were long remembered by his devoted successors. The works he left behind him were not numerous, though for that age a wonderful performance. There exists in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, an MS., which the celebrated Junius declared to be the work of Cædmon, and was procured from Archbishop Usher. It is not to be wondered at that the authenticity of the composition should be doubted by some writers; but the balance of evidence, both internal and external, is in favour of the contention of the mysterious Junius. I must leave the reader to look for himself more deeply into the subject, if his interest should lead him to desire more information. Mr Thorpe has furnished a valuable collection of Cædmon's compositions, which is readily accessible to the student. We adopt that gentleman's translations, and shall give a few extracts. The first selection is the very fine passage describing the love of Adam and Eve:

In their glad hearts no sinful passions move—
Their bosoms glow with pure and ardent love ;
With youth and beauty clad, they shone so fair,
Well might they with the angelic host compare :
The Lord Himself the pair with joy surveyed,
And while He blest, these were the words He said:
Teem now and wax : fill with your happy kin
The all-green earth ; your reign forthwith begin :
To you the sea-waves shall service owe,
And all creation shall in reverence bow.
To you be subject all the horned band,
And the wild beasts submit to your command ;
All living things that seek on earth their prey
And all that swim along the huge whale's way—
These all shall you with humble fear obey.

The dealings of the Almighty with the rebellious angels, and their expulsion from the presence of the Most High, is thus described :—

Shattered their vaults, their haughty threats [brought low,
Their glory dimmed, to drear exile they go ;
No joyous laugh breaks loudly forth to tell
Of heartfelt joy ; in hell accursed they dwell.
Of pain and sorrow, now the woe they know,
Tormenting waves of darkness o'er them flow ;
This, this, the meed of their rebellious sin,
Since they had thought the throne of God to win ;
Then, as before, when these base wars did cease,
In heaven's high courts, midst all the blessed [was peace ;
The glories waxed and the Eternal Lord
Was by his faithful ministers adored.

Another passage which is deserving of notice—

Satan discoursed, he who henceforth ruled hell
Spake sorrowing.
God's angel erst he had shone white in heaven,

Till his soul urged, and most of all its pride,
That of the Lord of hosts he should no more
Bend to the word.
About his heart his soul tumultuously heaved hot
[pains of wrath
Without him.
Then said he, Most unlike that this narrow place
To that which once we knew, high in heaven's
[realm,
Which my Lord gave me, though therein no more
For the Almighty we hold royalties.
Yet right hath He not done in striking us
Down to the fiery bottoms of hot hell,
Banished from heaven's kingdom, with decree
That He will set in it the race of man.
Worst of my sorrows this, that, wrought of earth
Adam shall sit in bliss on my strong throne ;
Whilst we these pangs endure, this grief in hell.
Woe ! Woe ! Had I the power of my hands,
And for a season, for one winter's space,
Night be without, then with this host, I—
But iron binds me round ; this coil of chains
Rides me ; I rule no more—close bonds of Hell
Hem me their prisoner.

There is traceable here an amount of artistic power which is evidence of some culture. These poems were written about the period 657-680. They were the product of Cædmon's maturer years, and are deeply interesting to us as exhibiting some of the piety and poetical power of our Anglo-Saxon forefathers.

JOHN H. LEGGOTT, F.R.H.S.

The Battle of Brunanburgh.

This famous battle was one of the most sanguinary conflicts and the most decisive in its results of the many that have occurred in our island ; ranking in importance with Hastings, Towton, Marston Moor, and Bannockburn, Yet do we know but little of its details, and strange to say, we do ot even know where it was fought. It has been sung in the Sagas of Norseland, and mentioned by our own monkish chroniclers in their Annals, but is so shrouded by the mists of the distant past, that it has almost become a myth. Scholars and Antiquaries knew of it as the last great struggle of the Angles and Danes of Northumbria for separate and independent existence as a kingdom in opposition to the efforts of the Wessexian line of Anglican Kings to combine the whole of the southern portion of Britain in one undivided monarchy.

Egbert is reckoned as the first Saxo-English King, but as far as Northumbria was concerned, he could scarcely be considered more than Bretwalda of the partially united Anglo-Saxon Heptarchy. as although he subdued the Northumbrians, he was only able to keep the turbulent race, jealous as they were of their liberties and independence, undei his sceptre in a species vassalage, their line of Anglian, afterwards of Danish King continuing in succession, but in a state of semi-independence and frequently struggling to free themselves from their condition as tributory rulers, during the reigns of Egbert's successors until Athelstone assumed the Anglican crown. He it was who really became the first monarch of South Britain or England in its entirety, and this dignity he acquired by his great victory over the Northumbrians at the battle of Brunanburh.

The interval between Egbert and Athelstone, was in Northumbria a period of complete anarchy, one succession of Danish invasions ; conflicts between the Danes and the Angles ; civil war between rival factions, the devastation of lands ; burning of villages, churches, and monasteries, murders and massacres being matters of daily occurrence. King succeeded King in rapid succession, sometimes Anglian, at others Danish, scarcely one of whom died a natural death. Eanred was reduced to vassalage by Egbert in 827, after whom followed Osberht and Ælla, the latter of whom was the murderer of Ragnar Lodbrog, the Dane, in the dungeon of Creyke Castle, which brought over his sons, Hinguar and Hubba, to revenge his death, by whom

Osberht and Ælla were slain in battle, and there followed a succession of Danish Kings, the kingdom being sometimes divided into three or four portions, held by Danish rulers, but the whole period was one of confusion, fighting and murder, which through the absence of annalists is exceedingly obscure.

At length in 741, Anlaf, son of Sightric, came to the throne, who, determining to free himself from vassalage to the Saxon King of England, proclaimed Northumbria an independent kingdom and himself an absolute sovereign. Hence he was continually at war with the Saxons, with varied success, being several times deposed, and as frequently recovering his throne to wage fresh wars with the Saxons, eventually flying to Ireland to make preparations, on an enormous scale to recover his kingdom, and confine the Saxons to that portion of England which lay south of the Humber, he claiming all the territory northward to the Tweed, and east and west from sea to sea.

He contracted an alliance with Constantine, King of the Grampians, and the Kings of Dublin, North Wales, and Strathclyde, also with the King of Norway, who undertook to send an enormous fleet up the Humber, manned by a host of fearless Scandinavian warriors, the other kings furnishing contingents, numerous and well armed, and it was to meet this formidable confederation of forces that Athelstane marched northward, encountering them at Brunanburh, and obtaining a complete and decisive victory; "slaying," as the Saxon Chronicle says, "five kings and seven earls."

From this time Northumbria ceased to be a kingdom, either independent or in vassalage, and was henceforth, until the Norman Conquest, governed by Viceroy Earls, appointed by the Kings of Saxon England.

The question arrises naturally—where was this momentous battle fought? and a most perplexing problem it is, which has never yet been satisfactorily answered, although several who have investigated the matter, have, in their own opinions at least, positively put their fingers on the site. Camden, one of our earliest antiquaries, placed it in Northumberland not far from the Castle of Bamborough, and this has never been disproved excepting by assertion. It is a question that formerly did not seem to claim much attention from historians, but in more recent times, it has been deemed more worthy of research, and has become a subject of warm controversy among antiquaries. Some of these have formed theories very wide of the mark, notably those who claim to have found the site at Bourn, in South Lincolnshire; at Burnley, in Lancashire, and in Cheshire. A correspondent of the *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1832, assumes to have found it Barrow-on-Humber, in Lincolnshire, and adduces some coincidental, geographical features, which might have some force but for the apparent fact that the battle was fought north of the Humber.

From the circumstances that Athelstane called at Beverley on his march, to implore the aid of St John, and left his sword in pledge that if victorious he would redeem it with princely donations, and that *on his return* he called for his sword and granted the famous charter commencing—

> "Als fre mak I thee
> As hert may think or egh may see,"

with sundry privileges and immunities to the town, it seems that the site lay northward or westward of that town, and that the battle was fought in either Yorkshire, Durham, or Northumberland.

There have been two theories recently put forth—one by Mr Todd of Hull, who places it at Little Weighton, near Beverley; the other by Mr Holderness, of Driffield, who feels assured that the locale of the battle was at Battleburn, near Driffield. Both gentlemen support their assumptions by a series of most plausible arguments, of a character that it would be difficult to controvert. Still, notwithstanding all these specious hypotheses and conjectures, in lack of contemporary evidence the problem remains unsolved.

FREDERICK ROSS, F.R.H.S.

Old Customs at York.

> "Old customs, oh! I love the sound,
> However simple they may be;
> Whate'er with time hath sanction found
> Is welcome, and is dear to me."
>
> John Clare.

Shrove Tuesday.

In olden time, on this day, the Minster was open to all comers, and it was the custom for all the apprentices, journeymen, and others to ascend the towers, and ring one of the bells which they termed The Pancake Bell, an amusement which was pretty well exercised. When Dr Lake came to the Minster he was much scandalised at this custom and its abuses, and resolved he would break through it at once, although the Dean and the other clergy endeavoured to dissuade him from it. Lake, however, was determined to prevent the desecration of the Minster, and resolved to make the experiment, for which he had liked to have paid very dear, for it was near costing him his life; however he made such a combustion and mutiny that York never remembered or saw the like. He began by reproving the rabble, then by taking steps for their expulsion, when they assailed him with brutal ferocity and would have torn him to pieces if some of the more moderate had not interposed and advised him to retire. "I have faced death too often in the field," he replied (alluding to his military experiences) "to shrink from the danger of martyrdom in the performance of my duty, but I should be sorry if any of your lives were to be endangered through your cruel and cowardly attack on me. But leave the ground at your bidding I will not." He was with difficulty rescued, but continued, at the imminent peril of his life, to reside in York till he had convinced his ferocious adversaries that York Minster was not to be converted into a place of idle riot, and that the custom was one more honoured in the breach than in the observance. Dr Lake subsequently became a Bishop, and was one of the seven who were committed to the Tower in the reign of James II.

ST. GEORGE'S DAY.

Formerly on St. George's Field, now cut through by the approach to the new bridge, but then attached to the Guild House of St. George, which stood near it, was celebrated the festival of its patron saint. Here pageants were exhibited, and at their conclusion, a sermon was preached from a pulpit to the audience, who were sat on forms and benches provided for the occasion.

At the present day, Englishmen are reviving the ancient custom of keeping the festival of their patron saint.

Not far from St. George's Field was kept the now obsolete ducking stool brought to the river side now and again for some unfortunate woman, who had the reputation of being a scold, and who was subjected to the degrading punishment of being placed in it and plunged three times into the river, amidst the laughs and jeers of the lookers-on, who assembled in large numbers at such times.

Ascension Day

Was, in by-gone days, devoted by the authorities of each of the 24 parishes in York to making their annual perambulation of the parish boundaries. This "beating of the bounds" was a great day, especially to the young Yorkers, who followed in the wake of the parish officials, and contrived to get a large amount of fun at their expense. The lads of All Saints' parish, North Street, provided themselves with bundles of sedge, and while the clerk was engaged in inscribing the boundary at the specified places, they struck his legs below the knee with their bundles. The place nearest the clerk, or that which gave the best chance of exercising this popular prerogative, was eagerly contended for.

The publication of maps, especially those of the Ordnance Survey, interfered with the custom, and in some of the parishes the perambulation was replaced by parish dinners on that day, but they have been abandoned, St. John's parish being the last to surrender.

Corpus Christi Day.

The great event of the year in mediæval York was the celebration of the Festival of Corpus Christi, the feast of the Blessed Sacrament, which took place on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday. It was accompanied by the exhibition of pageant plays upon religious subjects, produced by the several trade companies, each producing a pageant. The plays were enacted on portable stages, placed on wheels, enabling the latter to be drawn from place to place. They were decorated with tapestry and painted cloths, depicting the appropriate scenes, the necessary music being contributed by the waits and minstrels. The ancient streets being so narrow, it was necessary that the citizens should be separated into several audiences, thus performances were going on simultaneously in twelve different parts of the city. The machines were kept on Toft Green, and the first pageant was always played at the entrance to the Priory of the Holy Trinity, in Micklegate. This interesting thirteen century gateway was demolished a few years ago, to the regret of many citizens.

The day following, the Friday after Corpus Christi day, the procession took place, which was somewhat similar to the religious processions of the continent at the present time, and was conducted with all pomp and splendour. Those taking part in it assembled at the gateway of the Priory of the Holy Trinity, and, at the appointed hour, the procession commenced, the parochial clergy, in their surplices. leading. Then the Master of the Guild followed, invested with a silken cape, and attended by the six Keepers of the Guild, carrying white wands. The costly shrine of silver, gilt, and decorated with a profusion of jewels, enclosing a vase of beryl in which the sacred elements were deposited, was borne in the midst by the Chaplains of the Guild. The clergy and singers followed chanting the proper services, and the procession was accompanied by a great display of crosses, tapers, banners, and torches. After the ecclesiastics came the Civic Authorities, the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and other members of the Corporation, habited in their robes, attended by the city officers and others bearing lighted torches, followed by the officers and members of the numerous trade companies of the city, with their banners and torches. The streets through which the procession wended its way were crowded, the houses being decorated with tapestry and other hangings, and the road strewed with rushes and flowers. From the Priory gates it took its course to the Minster, where a sermon was preached in the Chapter House, at its conclusion the procession was again formed, and proceeded to the Hospital of St. Leonard, where the Holy Sacrament was left.

St. Luke's Day

in York was formerly known as Whip-Dog-Day, from the strange custom that the school boys indulged in, of whipping all the dogs seen in the streets on that day. The custom is supposed to have originated from the following circumstance. In Pre-Reformation times, a priest, whilst celebrating mass at this Festival in York, accidentally dropped the pix after consecration, which was immediately snatched up and swallowed by a dog that had been laid under the altar table. This profanation caused the death of the dog, and then the dog prosecution on this day began in this city.

Lammas Fair

commenced the day before Old Lammas Day by the ringing of the bell at St. Michael's Church, Spurriergate, at 3 p.m., when, in the Sheriffs' Court on Ousebridge, the Sheriffs of York gave up their authority in the city to the Lord Archbishop or his representative by delivering to him their white rods of office. During this Fair, the Sheriff's power of arresting any person was suspended within the city and suburbs, the Archbishop's representative only having authority. At 3 p.m. the day after Old Lammas Day the fair was concluded, and as the church bell rings the Archbishop's Bailiff re-delivers to the Sheriffs of York their white rods, and therewith their jurisdiction. At this Fair the Archbishop received the tolls on animals and wares at the several gates of the city in coming in and going out, and also kept a Piepoudre Court, for determining any differences that might have occurred during the Fair, the jury being empannelled out of Wistow, a town within the Archbishop's Liberty.

MARTINMAS.

Next to the Corpus Christi procession, the annual riding of the Sheriffs was the great show. It usually took place on the

Wednesday, eight days after Martinmas. The city waits, in their scarlet liveries and silver badges, led the way playing martial airs on their instruments through the crowded narrow streets; one of the waits was more conspicuous than the rest, he wore on his head a red tattered cap, a badge of great antiquity, its use or origin being unknown. Following the band were the Sergeants-at-Mace, Attorneys, and other Officers of the Sheriff's Court, on horseback, and habited in their gowns, then came the Sheriffs on horseback, apparalled in their black gowns and velvet tippets, their horses being handsomely clothed. Each Sheriff bore in his hand a white wand, his badge of office, whilst each servant leading the horses carried a gilded truncheon. Then followed a large concourse of country gentlemen, citizens, &c., on horseback numbering about four hundred. The procession first rode up Micklegate into the gateway of the Priory of the Holy Trinity, where one of the Sergeants-at-Mace made proclamation thus—"O Yes! &c. We command, on our liege Lord's behalf, the King of England, whom God save and keep, that the peace of the King be well kept and maintained within this city and the suburbs thereof by night and by day with all manner of men, both great and small, in pain that falls thereon. Also we command that no man walk armed within the city by night or by day except the officers assigned for keeping the peace, in pain of forfeiting his armour and his body to prison.

"Also we command that the bakers of the city bake good bread, and that the brewers of the city brew good ale.

"Also we command that no man walk in the city nor in the suburbs by night without light before him, *i.e.*, from Pasche (Easter) to Michaelmas after ten of the clock; and from Michaelmas to Pasche, after nine of the clock.

"Also we command that the lanes and streets of the city be cleansed of all manner of nuisance, that is of stocks of stones, of middings, and of all manner of filth on the pain that falls thereon.

"Also we command that no manner of men, make any insurrection, congregation, or assembly, within the city or suburbs, in disturbance of the peace, nor in letting of the execution of the common law, upon pain of punishment, and all that he may forfeit to the King.

"Also that no common woman walk in the street without a gray hood and a white wand in her hand."

At the conclusion of the Proclamation, the procession wends its way through the principal streets of the city, making the same proclamation at the corners of the street at the west side of Ouse Bridge, after that on the corner of Castlegate and Ousegate, then at the corner of Coney Street and Stonegate, near the Common Hall; then again at the south gate of the Minster. After that they rode to St Marygate Tower, and made the same proclamation there. Returning they rode through Petergate, Colliergate. Fossgate, over the bridge into the Walmgate. where the proclamation is again made; and. lastly, they return into the Market Place. in the Pavement, where the same ceremony being repeated, the Sheriffs depart to their own houses. In the evening the Sheriffs' Banquet was held, usually at one of the public halls in the city, at which most of the gentlemen in the procession were present.

The Twelve Days of Sanctuary.

Yoole-Girthol, or the twelve days of sanctuary for all unthrifty folks coming to the City during Christmas, was the most remarkable of the old customs in York.

On St. Thomas's Day (the Apostle before Yoole), it was anciently the custom of the City

Sheriffs at the hearing of the church bell of All Hallows, Pavement, to attend the Mass of St. Thomas at the High Altar, and there to offer at the Mass. The north door, where the procession possibly emerged after the Mass, possesses a beautiful early knocker, and it is supposed that it was used for the purpose of sanctuary, that when a criminal, fleeing from justice, was able to lay hold of the knocker he was safe from his pursuers. From the church the Sheriffs, with their retinue, proceeded to the Pillory in the Pavement, here the Sergeants with their brazen horns blew Yoole-Girthe, and made Proclamation. "We command that the peace of our Lord the King be well kept and maintained by night and by day, &c.,"(as was used in the proclamation of the Sheriff's riding). Also that all manner of wh——s, thieves, dice players, and all other unthrifty folk be welcome to the town, whether they come late or early, at the reverence of the high feast of Yoole till the twelve days be passed.

The Proclamation being duly made they proceeded with the four sergeants to the ancient Toll-Booth in Thursday Market (now St. Sampson's Square), where was kept a horn of brass belonging to one of them and blew Yoole-Girthol. The other three Sheriff's Sergeants were each provided with a horn, and went to each of the four City Bars and blew Yoole-Girthol.

The Sheriffs, their ladies and officers kept the high feast of Yoole by official entertainments. In 1839 the brazen horn kept at the toll-booth, and which used to be transferred by the City Sheriffs to their successors as a symbol of office, was presented by the then Sheriffs to the Museum, where it may now be seen in the Hospitium.

It was also the custom on St. Thomas's Day for one of the Friars of St. Peter's to ride through the city on horseback with his face to the horse's tail, guiding himself by holding a rope instead of a bridle in one hand, whilst with the other he held a shoulder of mutton, over his back and on his breast hung a cake, whilst his face was painted to resemble a Jew. The youths of the city rode with him, crying and shouting Youl, Youl, with the officers of the city riding before and making proclamation. This custom was said to commemorate the day the city was betrayed into the hands of the Conqueror by two Friars, and the get-up was supposed to represent one of them. At the dissolution of monasteries the custom was abandoned as far as the Friar was concerned in it, but the young men used to dress up one of their companions like the Friar and call him Youl, and continued the custom.

On Christmas Eve mistletoe was carried to the high altar of the Minster, and afterwards proclamation was made of "a public and universal liberty, pardon and freedom to all sorts of inferior and even wicked people at the gates of the city, towards the four quarters of Heaven."

Christmas.

The City Waits, until within the last few years, used to perambulate the streets on five successive early Monday mornings immediately preceding Christmas, and after serenading the citizens with an ancient air, proceded to salute the heads of each important house by name—"Good morning, Mr Smith! Good morning, Mrs Smith! good masters and ladies all! Past one o'clock and a fine morning!" The following lines describe the York waits at the beginning of the last century—

In a winter's morning
Long before the dawning
Ere the cock did crow,
Or stars their light withdraw,

Waked by a hornpipe pretty,
Played along York city,
By th' help o'er night's bottle,
Damon made this ditty,
In a winter's night,
By moon or lanthorn-light,
Through hail, rain, frost, or snow,
Their rounds the music go;
Clad each in frieze or blanket,
(For either Heaven be thanked !)
Lined with wine a quart,
Or ale a double tankard.
Burglars send away,
And bar-guests dare not stay
Of claret snoring sots
Dream o'er their pipes and pots,
Till their helpmates wake 'em
Hoping music 'll make 'em
Find our pleasant Cliff,
That plays the Rigadoon;
Candles four in the pound,
Lead up the jolly round,
White cornet shrill i' the middle,
Marches, and merry fiddle;
Cortal with deep hum, hum,
Cries out "We come, we come."
Theorbo loudly answers, "Thrum,
"Thrum, thrum, thrum, thrum !"
But their fingers frost nipt
So many notes are o'erslipt,
That you'd take sometimes
The Waits for Minster chimes;
And then to hear their music
Would make both me and you sick;

And much more, too, to hear
A roopy fiddler call
With voice as Moll would cry
"Come, shrimps or cockles buy!
"Past three, fair, frosty morn!
"Good morrow, my masters all!"

In the year 1756, John Camidge, chief musician to the Lord Mayor and Corporation of York, and organist of the Minster, com posed, amongst other popular tunes for the City Waits, a Grand March on the occasion of the reception in York of the Prince of Wales, afterwards King George the Fourth. The City band played this tune again and again and it became very popular. It was e-pecially played in the Polonaise, an old fashioned dance, when the Prince had the Lady Mayoress for his partner. Some time after, his Royal Highness sent a letter to the Lord Mayor, saying that during the whole of his subsequent journey the tune which he had heard played at York he had been constantly whistling. The Lord Mayor acquainted the composer of this, who gladly sent a copy of his march to the Prince, and who, through the Duke of York gave it to the Guards' band, who have relieved guard to its strain since, and which tune is the well known "Duke of York's March."

In 1835, the City Waits, who numbered eight, were abolished by the Municipal Reform Act, and were no longer in Corporation employ; having, however, received fixed salaries and their liveries, a question arose as to whether they were entitled to compensation for loss of office, which by an appeal to a High Court was established, and resulted in each of them being awarded some £8 odd annually.

PUNISHMENTS.

Amongst the instruments of punishment beyond the Pillory in the Pavement, and the ducking stool near the river, there were fixed amongst others in the city for minor offences the capon call; the thew (a kind of moveable stocks); the whipping cart, and the stocks; an example of the latter still remains at the entrance to the burial ground of St. Lawrence. For greater offences there was the gallows on Knavesmire, known as the Tyburn. The ghastly custom was carried out of fixing the heads of traitors upon long poles and placing them on the summit of the City gateways, especially Micklegate Bar. The last occasion upon which this Bar was disfigured was in the year 1746, when the heads of two rebels were set up; after staying there for above seven years, they were stolen during a dark night. The event created a sensation, but a few months afterwards the culprit was discovered, and at the Assizes was sentenced to two years' imprisonment, to pay a fine of £5, and to find sureties for his good behaviour for two years more.

In the olden times the city was lighted by oil lamps, few in number, watchmen were scarce, so that during the long evenings it was necessary for small parties to be attended by torch bearers, for whose convenience extinguishers hung at the sides of the doorway for putting out the flambeaux when they were no longer required. There yet remains in Petergate the only example we have left of a torch extinguisher. The sedan was a favourite conveyance for a lady to be carried over the then rough pavements, whilst for longer journeys the flying coaches were utilized, which often took a week to reach London. Honour was not satisfied unless a duel was resorted to, whilst amongst the old amusements cock fighting and bull baiting occuped a prominent position, the latter being exhibited in Thursday Market (St. Sampson's Square), in the centre of which was formerly a large bull ring. Here were also erected the hustings in election times until the passing of the Ballot Act.

GEORGE BENSON.

Elizabethan Gleanings.

I am not aware how it may be in the present day, but it was the wont of the former rulers of this country to have drawn up for them elaborate "household books," wherein it might be seen how much the king's breakfast was to cost per diem, who was to serve it, how the royal servants were to be fed, and what wages were to be paid to men of all ranks, from the Lord Chamberlain to the Clerk of the Kitchen and the turnspit. Occasionally these books for the regulation of the royal household went into details of the very minutest description. Thus, it is prescribed in some of the household books, which of the lower servants shall be entitled by way of perquisite, to the shank bones of legs of mutton and the leavings of cold meat. To the household book compiled for "the spacious days of great Elizabeth" was appended a statement of the "annual expense, civil and military," which, as it casts some light not only on the scale of wages in those days but on the relative importance of certain strong places in the realm, it seems worth while to look through to see what bearing it it may have upon Old Yorkshire.

When Queen Elizabeth occupied the throne of England there was a Council of the North, consisting of a Lord President with a salary of £1,000. There were seven councillors with salaries of £50 a year each, and a secretary, who was paid £33 6s 8d. The odd shillings and pence suggest that this secretary must have been a lawyer. Each district of England had its "receivers of the revenues of the Crown," there being one receiver for Yorkshire, with a salary of £100, with £70 for "portage," and a £20 allowance. These revenues were, of course, mainly from the customs; and I find this entry as to Kingston-upon-Hull:—

	£	s.	d.
Customer; fee, ...	20	0	0
Reward;	53	6	8
Comptroler; fee,.........	3	6	8

Two lawyers here, evidently. No other Yorkshire port finds mention under this head. There was a Surveyor of the Queen's Lands in each of the Yorkshire Ridings, each with a fee of £13 6s. 8d. Then there were special officers for exceptional duties, as "Receavers for the honor of Pomfret, with the lordship of Knaresburgh, and the late college lands and chauntrey land, York hire; fee £36 13s 4d." By an accidental note I find that the receiver in this instance was Richard Ramshare, who, if he had lived to this day, would probably have called himself Ramshaw. There were also receivers for Pickering and Tickhill, in Yorkshire, with salaries of £5 each.

At Sandal Castle there was then an "under captaine" who was paid by the Crown, his "fee per diem" being 1s 4d. He was permitted to keep a servant at a wage of sixpence a day. In a table of "the number of men appointed to be trayned up in every shire throughout the realm, *anno* 1584," I find these entries:—

Yorkshire	490
York and Kingston-*super*-Hull	40
Beverlie	10

There were then "fugitive over the seas" from Yorkshire, "Thomas Clementes, gent.; Margaret Clement, widowe; John Clement, M.D.; John Gryffen, and Richard Burton."

It will be seen that the contribution of Yorkshire to the standing army, or train-bands, was not large, but it was, nevertheless, larger than that of any other county, its nearest competitor being Kent, with 430 men, Devon coming next with 400. The *summa totalis* was under 10,000, or, in exact figures, 9,670.

Whilst on this subject it will be interesting to glance back for a moment to an earlier reign. The household book of Edward III. enables us to see what contributions Yorkshire made to the navy of that able and stormy-tempered king. To "the Northe Flete" Hull contributed 16 "shippes" and 466 mariners. York fitted out one small ship, with nine mariners; Grimsby (spelled Grymesby), 11 ships, with 171 mariners, and Scarborough one ship and 19 mariners. The "some of the Northe Flete" was:—Shippes, 217; mariners. 4,521; the "some of all the English Flete" being "shippes, 700; mariners, 14,151."

AARON WATSON.

The Fight for the Hornsea Fishery.

A Trial by Combat.

The first beams of the morning sun came over the trees that fringed Hornsea Mere as brightly six hundred years ago as they do to-day, but very different, upon at least one occasion, was the scene which they lit up. The Mere, or Marr, as it was then styled, was the centre of attraction to a large concourse of people, and especially to one portion of its border were the steps of the crowd bent. For the most part the multitude was composed of strangers, who seemed to be of the military order, though there was a goodly number of the farm-servants and others of the district, as well as the lords of the neighbouring manors. Whate'er their station or appearance, however, one subject was the theme of conversation, and that was the combat which was to be fought that day by the side of the picturesque little lake. The lake itself, or rather the right of fishing therein, was the object of the fight. The Abbot of Meaux claimed the right of taking the fish in the southern part of the waters, while the Abbot of St. Mary's Abbey, York, asserted that the right was his alone. Now at a time when fast days could only be made feast days by a plentiful supply of fish, such a privilege was one not lightly to be foregone; so either worthy monk held out for the coveted prescription for his respective house. They had tried the matter by means of parchment and pen without settling the vexed question, so at length it had been decided to try the virtue of sword and battle-hammer, by strength of arm and skill of eye, which the vain superstition of the age imagined would be unerringly guided by Heaven in the cause of the right.

Well, this summer's day in the year 1260, was the day appointed for the trial. All was gaiety and mirth; everyone was too much accustomed to arms to think this a serious matter, and even the twelve champions (six for each of the Abbots.) grimly joked on the sacerdotal character of their masters as they donned their barrel-shaped helmets, and put right the last buckle of their padded leather armour, or ringed mail, and adjusted the small caps or plates which covered their joints. Here, upon palfreys of becoming docility, were mounted the rival Abbots, each surrounded by no mean retinue of well-armed dependants. There stood, or rode slowly about the place, the knight who had been appointed marshall, and with his heralds kept order, appointing places of vantage to strangers to view the fight. He took notice also that none moved the boundary of stakes; these had been fixed the day before by a mounted horseman swimming his steed across the Mere to decide what was the exact limit of right to be exercised by the victorious Abbot, whichever he might happen to be. At last all was ready; in a wide ring the two groups of warriors stood facing each other, and but awaited the signal to begin the fray. Oh! for the pen of some old chronicler of the ancient days to call up the forms of the stalwart champions, to discourse to you glibly of *pourpoint* and *counterpoint*, of *gambesons*, and *poleyns* and many other things which we, however, need perhaps not trouble much with now; let me briefly say that they were fully armed in the panoply of their day, and that it was, as nearly as may be, that of the average appearance of the cross-legged crusaders upon the tombs in our churches. Each man had a shield, a pointless sword, and either a pointed hammer, or a flail-like mace. The six champions of Meaux (the plaintiffs) had surcoats embroidered with a cross, with birds in the angles; the others had upon their surcoats what may have been simply a large cross.

The herald's trumpet sounds. The marshall has given the word to begin. The combat has commenced, and every spectator thrusts his chin eagerly over the shoulder of the one in front, and with a beating pulse feels all the high ecstatic pleasure of the field echoed in his breast.

The two little forces rush swiftly at each other like two herds of deer, and in a second are in the heat of the strife. They meet; blows are delivered and parried—till down with a crash falls great Hubert, the best champion of the Yorkists. He is up again, —no, Brian of Meaux has struck his uplifted shield, once, twice, thrice, till his arm is bent, and he is prostrate once more. Forward rush two others of York, bestride his struggling figure, and beat back his asailants, and young Brian, with a plate picked off his armour by Hubert's martel-de-fer, is bleeding at the knee. Hubert rises, and the combatants stand back, only to rush together again a little to the right, where Gilbert and Ban, both of the Meaux side, are attacking John of the Ouse, who retreats as best he may. Once again all the glittering swords are scintillating in one confused anvil-striking;

lunge and parry, feint and thrust, succeed each other fast and thick, so that the eye cannot see quickly enough to note all the feats of skill and strength displayed. The burly Hubert throws his shield at the head of one opponent, felling him to the ground senseless, while William of Atwick, not to be out-done, hurls his shield spinning to the edge of the lists, and with his mace—a heavy ball studded with spikes swinging by a chain from a staff—rushes like a whirlwind clean through the York champions, and two fall with bruised mail and bleeding limbs before he is seized in the arms of John of the Ouse, and cast headlong at the feet of his friends. Panting and bleeding the sixes face each other again, when the trumpet sounds, and a brief interval is allowed for rest and the washing of wounds.

Again the clarion peals, again the champions mix in the fray, and once more the eyes of the spectators are all agog with greedy appreciation of the sight. The sun rises, and the heat increases, yet bout succeeds bout, with the scales of victory poised almost equally for each party.

The noon is passed in more wary fight and longer intervals of rest.

The noon is gone by, and long shadows trail slowly and silently across the lists ; the combatants renerve themselves at each fresh attack, and every incident of the morn seems to be renewed, though now the warriors are bruised and battered, red with blood where not washed with the streams from their perspiring brows, and the blows want some of the vigour of the early day. The vesper bell of Nunkeeling Church is heard in a pause of the fight, and it seems that the champions of the sword are as well matched as those of the pen had been ; when at the sound, feeling that the decisive hour is come, the Yorkists, stung by the taunts of some of the monks of Meaux who look on, throw all their energy into one final effort. Ban is hurled by a supreme effort of Hubert clear out of the lists, and so is out of the fight by the laws of combat, and the remaining five are unable to stem the torrent of blows which come beating and rattling about their ears ; shields already battered are broken, bruised arms are beaten powerless, and two of the Meaux champions lie in the dust from grievous wounds, of which one of them afterwards is to die. The others, after a brief struggle, are thrown down, and the champions of York have won !

*   *   *   *   *

The shouts of the partizans of the Abbot of St. Mary rent the air, so that the voice of the herald, proclaiming the fishery theirs, was scarcely heard, while the discomfitted Abbot of Meaux and his friends found a hundred reasons why their side had failed. However, they accepted the defeat as became them, though it was said that more than one serious encounter was the result of that day's work. Thus the monks of Meaux lost for ever the right of fishing in Hornsea Mere, and the Abbey table had to be supplied from more propitious waters.

T. TINDALL WILDRIDGE.

Folk Assemblies.

In England, for hundreds and hundreds of years, it has been deemed one of the rights of the people to publicly assemble for the discussion of public questions, without let or hindrance. Though kings have tried to suppress and abolish this right, it still lives and flourishes bravely, and to-day, should any common question agitate the public mind, the mayor, or other chief person, summons a town's meeting, for the consideration and discussion of the matter.

In some of our large towns, Leeds, Glasgow, &c., may be found Moot Halls, but our subject deals chiefly with the legal and judicial affairs of our ancestors about a thousand years ago, before these Halls were established, and when the meetings were held in the open air. The great difference between the holding of a court now, and the holding cf a folk moot in the days of the Saxon and Dane has been brought about by evolution. Altered circumstances have brought about a different result. The increase of the nation has been a potent factor in the change. In the olden time, when the population of the entire country was under two millions, one court, for general purposes, was sufficient for a district, if it were held two or three times a year. Now there are special courts for special purposes, which are held, in some cases, every day. But, in the main, all are modelled on the lines of, and to a great extent governed, as were the courts of our early English forefathers.

It was the boast of our Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian ancestors that justice was brought to every man's door, by the establishment of courts for shires, hundreds, and tithings. It has been usual to ascribe the establishment of this system to Alfred, rightly surnamed the Great, but it is certain that counties and their government by aldermen and sheriffs existed long before his time, as they are mentioned in the laws of Ina, some three hundred years his predecessor. Hundreds are first mentioned under Edgar (957-975), and tithings under Knut (1016-1035).

In dealing with questions of the society of so long ago it is necessary to know how the people were classified. The whole free population of England under the rank of royalty was divided into two great classes, eorls (earls) and ceorls (churls), that is noble and yeomen ; and as the affairs of each tribe were directed by the *eldest* (ealdorman, alderman) this name, ealdorman, became synonymus with *chief*, and was the principal Anglo-Saxon title applied to any man in authority. Under the Danish monarchs, the word jarl (earl) became an official title applied to a governor, and the word *thane* supplanted the word eorl (earl) as a designation of nobility. Thus we have an official class, aldermen and earls, with whom the bishops ranked; a class of nobles, designated thanes, who were landed proprietors, who were liable to military service on horseback, and therefore equal to knights; and between the thane and the serf or slave was the ceorl, churl, or freemen, the basis of their society, and all below freemen were mere cyphers in the community, only so many head to feed and keep in subjection.

Every freeman was registered in some tithing or other. Indeed every man was obliged by law to place himself under the protection of some lord, failing which he might be seized as a robber. Each man was bound, or had to be "bour" or bondsman, for the good conduct of the other inhabitants of the tithing. Hence our word neighbour—a "nigh" or "near pledge."

In the English tongue, the freeman alone, was known as "the man"—"the churl"—

"the free-necked man" (whose long hair floated over a neck that had never bent to a lord)—" the weaponed man" (who alone bore sword and spear). His weapons were the insignia of his freedom, and he alone possessed the right of revenge or private war, which was a great check upon lawless outrage in that primitive society. The punishment due for wrong-doing had to spring from each man's personal action, and every freeman was his own avenger for an injury, either to himself, to his wife, to his children, to his slaves, or to anything that was his. But even thus early we can see that there was a desire to modify and restrict this private revenge, by substituting for it "blood-wite" or money compensation for the injury done. The compensation was assessed according to the injury inflicted, and the rank of the injured one. But the price of life or limb was not paid by the wrong-doer to the wronged one, but by the family or house of the wrong-doer to the house or family of the wronged one. At a later period, their kings imposed penalties, besides compensation, on anyone who took revenge before he had demanded legal redress.

This scale ef money compensation could not be drawn up without a conference of freemen ; and thus was held a folk moot, on the moot hill or at the foot of the sacred tree round which their homesteads clustered, and where the whole community met to administer its own justice and frame its own laws.

A government for each tribe was formed on the model of their township government, and indeed the government of the whole country (when finally united under the rule of one king) was modelled thus. For what was their country to them but one vast home and peopled by one immense family. Some of their laws recognised this as a fact, that an injury done to an individual was not done to him alone, but to the commonwealth. We still recognise this, especially if wrong is done to an English citizen abroad.

This then was their model—a presiding chief, the leading men proposing and debating, and all the freemen saying "Yea" or "Nay." Every freeman was a voter, and had a right to attend carrying his weapons. But the attendance at these moots were sometimes so poor (not in the Danelagh, where the inhabitants had a natural liking for, and were proud of, and took great interest in, these folk meetings) ; but in Saxon England that it had to be enforced by law. Such law maintaining that the interests of the commonwealth are paramount, and superior to all private interests. Thus a quorum, or minimum number was fixed, and summoned to attend; and Athelstan ordered punishment to those who refused. Lapse of years and diminishd interest practically limited it to those we were summond.

We have noticed that the freeman attended armed, but armed men when beaten at law, were apt, in their excited and angry mood, and in spite of heavy penalties on all brawling and breaking of the peace at these moots, to fall back on their weapons; and unseemly brawls and bloodshed finally caused the abolition of the practice of attending with weapons.

The penalty for even murmuring or stirring at the Tynwald Meeting in the Isle of Man was hanging and drawing. The people had one chance of conducting themselves with propriety. If they failed to do so then no more opportunity was offered.

Like all idolators, the Anglo Saxons and Scandinavians were very superstitious and were very fearful of witchcraft, hence all their courts were held openly, in the open air, sometimes on the banks of a river, or in some place perhaps sacred in its associations, and sometimes on anartificial hill, according to the locality. If the hill were artificial it was composed of earth brought from all parts of the district in which it was situated. Dotted up and down the country, here and there, we still find remains of these ancient meeting places; and doubtless more could be found, if only this branch of antiquarian research were well worked, for little has been done in this direction save by a few zealous antiquaries in a few counties. In this respect even our Ordnance Survey Maps are misleading, until the true meaning of their errors is known. Moot Hill is most generally given as Moat Hill. In the East Riding we have one unmistakeable Moot Hill, one which bears its name even to the present day. The moot hill for Driffield Hundred is to be found at the north end of Driffield, not far from the Scarbro' Road. The street leading past it is now Gibson Street, but once it was Mood Hill, a corruption of Moot Hill. The name is however preserved in Moot Hill Terrace, a row of houses on the lower side of the grass field in which the hill is situated. The hill is in a good state of preservation, being well rounded on the north-west side, and, having been formed on a rather steep declivity, the top is level, forming a little plateau. There are two curved ascents, one on the north and the other on the south side ; and the height of the hill on the west side is between twenty and thirty feet. Not far from the foot of the hill runs a beck of clear water, and in the grassy field across the stream are the remains of the royal castle that once lifted its thick massive walls above the forest which covered this district. One of its owners, King Alfred of Northumbria, is buried about a mile away in Little Driffield Church ; and it was in this castle, doubtless, that the laws were signed and sealed, after their proclamation from the Moot Hill.

JOHN NICHOLSON.

Quaint Gleanings from the Parish Register Chest of Kirkby Wharfe.

From Queen Elizabeth to Queen Victoria is a lengthy period, and full of stirring incidents in the history of England. Three centuries separate them, yet for almost the whole of those three centuries the registers of my late retired rural parish* have been carefully preserved, and the records of three hundred years are all contained in one small iron chest. Into what scanty room is compressed the history of an entire parish of seven hundred souls for all those years! That chest seems fitly to represent the iron hand of Time seizing and pressing in its tight grasp the quickly succeeding generations. And many a moral may the minister who is the guardian of such records gather as from time to time he turns over those yellow, closely-written pages. Though it is his first and highest duty to make himself acquainted with the living inhabitants of his parish, and to minister to their bodily and spiritual requirements, yet he soon feels a curiosity to know something of those who

* Kirkby Wharfe.

have gone before—the ministers who have preceded him, and the people amongst whom they dwelt—now swept away like the autumn leaves into the mournful desolation of the past. And that Past is buried in the iron register chest. Thither, therefore, he ofttimes resorts. He digs down into the ages that are gone and brings to light the records of those who have long been forgotten, and whose very names would have perished from the earth if they had not been preserved by the careful pens of his predecessors. There he may trace the baptisms, the marriages, the funerals of successive generations chronicled by successive ministers,—people and pastor alike appearing for a little while and then vanishing away. He notices the change of handwriting, betokening the change of minister. He observes it firm and bold at first, as of one in the vigour of middle life, and gradually he sees it become feeble and faltering ere it altogether ceases, all in the space of a few pages. Then a new officiating minister appears on the scene, and the funeral of the preceding incumbent having been duly registered, the confident hand of his successor takes up the pen and pursues the chronicle of life and death, soon in his turn to resign it to a stranger. There are no books in the minister's library more profitable for occasional study than the parish registers. There he learns how soon the people among whom he labours will have passed away, like their forefathers—how quickly he himself will have to resign his office and his dwelling-place to another; and he girds himself up to do the work of the present. He desires to leave behind him, if not in earthly registers, yet in another "book of remembrance," kept not in iron chests, but in a more secure and enduring place where moth and rust corrupt not—the lasting record of faithful labours done while it was day.

But the registers are not altogether mournful, reminding us only of the sorrowful end of weary life. The baptisms tell of the gladness of motherhood triumphing over pain, and the happy gathering of families to the christening of the little one that has long since grown old and grey. And the register of marriages is a long record of bright faces, and merry peals, and bounding hearts; and every separate signing of names becomes, in the language of Tennyson—

> "Mute symbol of a joyful morn,
> To village eyes as yet unborn."

And scattered throughout the registers and the other documents contained in the parish chest there are little traits of character and indications of feeling which reward the diligent investigator. There are few chests from which there may not be culled some illustrations of bygone customs and some allusions to the history of our country which are exceedingly interesting. The old parish accounts, which were formerly drawn up by the clergyman, and which are often found preserved along with the registers, abound in curious facts and hints, throwing light upon the past.

From these various ancient documents, as now existing in the chest belonging to my late parish, I propose giving a few extracts which, with the accompanying comments, may prove interesting illustrations of the life of former generations, and may furnish some useful suggestions for the present day. As my latest extract will refer to a period now about a century past, and as the connection of a clergyman's family with the parish in which he has officiated generally ceases with his death, there will be no danger of my hurting the feelings of any friends of the departed vicars of my late parish, when I now proceed to speak of the censorious vicar, the domestic vicar, the energetic vicar, the methodical vicar, and the litigious vicar.

The censorious vicar comes upon the scene in the year 1628 and signalizes his entrance on the duties of his parish by three notices in the registers reflecting on the conduct of his immediate predecessor. Three times over he records in Latin, "Through the carelessness and negligence of the preceding vicar all the names of persons baptzed—married—buried—were omitted from the year of our Lord 1623 up to the present time.—Tho. Clarke." Now, no language can be too strong to apply to such culpable remissness in the discharge of a public trust, but that language would come better from the lips or the pen of any other than the successor of him who had been guilty of the grave offence. For a man to dwell on the faults of his predecessor in office shows at least a want of proper humility. And it is scarcely the part of a wise man thus to draw the attention of the world to his own conduct, and to invite them to look for instances, which may probably soon be found, of his own fallibility. For the sake of their office it is better to throw a veil over the shortcomings of those who have held it, than by unnecessarily exposing their faults to drag the office itself into the dust. Let us speak tenderly of those who have gone before us, even as we shall need the kindly consideration of those who come after us. "De mortuis nihil nisi bonum" is as much the dictate of prudence as of charity.

This sentiment is singularly enforced in the very instance of our censorious vicar. For when he had passed away, and the parish chest came into the hands of his successor, what now is the state of the registers?

* Kirkby Wharfe, Girmston, near Tadcaster, Yorkshire.

Surely there will be no "carelessness or negligence" visible in any part of them! The "preceding vicar" will be found immaculate this time! There will be no room for censure now. Alas! for the fallibility of the virtuous and the infirmity of the strong! For what do we read from the pen of the next clergyman, in the register of baptisms? "Memorandum. That when Mr. Fra. Sherwood entered vicar he found the register omitted till May, 1642, from the year above, viz. 1639." In the register for marriages—"Memorandum. That when I, Francis Sherwood, entered vicar, I found the register neglected from the year 1639 till the present 1643." And again there is a similar memorandum in the register of burials. Observe, there is here only a notice of the fact, without any reflection on the character of the previous vicar. But how strange that the man who commenced his duties with such a flourish of self-sufficiency and censoriousness, should at the close of them be found as wanting as his faulty predecessor in the discharge of his responsible office! "Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off."

But we pass on to the domestic vicar—William Kaye, Master of Arts, who held the living from 1668 to 1704. There is a curious old account book belonging to this vicar, which contains in his own handwriting all the tithes he received for thirty-six years. The separate items of payment as they annually recur appear to have been for "House, Easter due, kine, plough, fat beef, fowls, bees, forge, orchard, wool, pigs, geese, dovecote, kiln, sheep, lambs, servants." The payments of one parishoner are given as an example:—

Wm Pick. House 4d. Easter Due 8d. Kine 3s. 4d. Plough 1d. Geese and Turkeys 2s. 6d. Beef 8d. Orchard 4s. Servants 2s. Total 13s. 7d.

What endless trouble and ill-will such a system of remuneration must have stirred up between pastor and people! How painful it must have been for the unhappy parson! How irritating to his parishioners! He could not take an evening stroll down a quiet green lane without being suspected of a design to look after his share of the apples and plums in the adjoining orchard. He could not make a call upon one of his farmers without being supposed to be counting up the geese and the turkeys. He could not walk past a sheltered cottage without being charged with casting an evil eye on the bee-hives. He must have been often regarded as the common enemy of his people, ever lying in wait for their small profits, and falling on the gardens and orchards like a blight or a mildew! Let us be thankful that the rural society of the present day is not torn asunder by such an unfortunate system, but that by the commutation of tithes, a fixed payment is settled on every house and holding which the tenant regards as nothing more than part of his rent.

But I have alluded here to this particular tithe-book because, on its outer leaves, there are some very interesting entries of another kind. By examining the registers, we find that our domestic vicar was so unhappy as to be left a widower in the year 1680: "Elizabeth, wife of William Kaye, vicar of this parish, buried Dec. 22, 1680." The care of his family, consisting of a little girl of seven ("Bapt., 1673, Anna ffilia Gulielmi Kaye, vic, paroch. Ober. 21"), and one son, seems now to have fallen entirely on the vicar, unassisted by any female friend or house-keeper; since from this date we actually find the weekly washing accounts for himself and his little daughter in his own handwriting upon the blank pages of his tithe-book. For example:

"Cloaths at washing, Jan. 9, 1681.
"1 Shirt and Waistcoat, 6 Hank, 2 caps, 11 Bands, 3 Socks, 11 Cuffs."
"Jan. 30.—2 shirts, 8 Bands, 2 caps, 4 hank, 1 wastcoate, 2 pare socks, 3 pr cuffs, 1 pr sheet and pillowbear."
"Jan. 30.—Nancy's Cloaths.—2 sh: & 3 Apr: 2 night coifes & 3 ffrontlets, 2 bibs, 1 pr of Ruffles, 2 pr cuffs, 2 Tuckers, 1 hank."

Very touching is the enumeration of this poor little motherless girl's neat wardrobe, so carefully worked for her by loving hands, now still and cold in the grave! We can almost fancy we see her, walking by the side of her fond father in his gown and bands to church, dressed in her "ruffles and ffrontlets, and tuckers, and cuffs"—at least one bright sunny spot in the widower's wintry desolation. Alas! she was not left long to solace him. Among the burials, two years after, 1683, appears the melancholy notice of Nancy's death:

"Anne, daughter of Willlam Kaye, Clerke, by Elizabeth his Wife, dyed of ye small Pox at Yorke & was buried at Snt Helen's Church Sept. 11. 1683." (Probably she had gone to school at York.)

How much sorrow is compressed into this brief record! How touching is the mention of the dead mother along with the departed child! How sad that the dear little girl should be buried so far from the quiet country church where her mother lay, and near which she herself had played in her happy infancy —especially as the churchyard of St. Helen's, York, has long ago been desecrated, and now forms a paved square resounding all day long with the traffic of the metropolis of the north!

Alas! for her poor father! "A stricken man was he!" However, he had still one boy remaining. But he was soon to be deprived even of him; for, in the register of burials of 1694, we find the following entry:

"Wm. son of Wm. Kaye, Clerke, dyed April 5th, being Easter Eve, and was buried April 7, 1694."

That is a sweet touch of faith and hope very affecting and very reassuring—"being Easter-Eve." It is not for us to sorrow as those without hope, when our dear ones are committed "earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust," since, in the words of the Collect for Easter-even (which must have comforted the good vicar's heart that darkday) "through the grave and gate of death we and they shall pass to our joyful resurrection for His merits who died and was buried and rose again for us." There was nothing left to the poor vicar now but his parish and his garden ; and we find in the tithe-book the following interesting entry for 1698 :

"Ro: Addinell : paid to him for garden 10s ; 3 trees, 3s. 6d.—seede, 1s.—Rose trees, 1s.—in all, 10s. 6d."

So his leisure hours were occupied with his fruit-trees and his flowers. Perhaps the old-fashioned creeping rose-trees, with their variegated petals, which may even yet be seen in the vicarage garden, are descended from the rose-trees which the old vicar planted two centuries since to solace the loneliness of his declining days.

There only remains one entry more—and *not* the in vicar's handwriting—to wind up the story of his life :

"1704 Wm. Kaye, Clerk and Vicar of this Parish —buried Jan. 6, 1704-5."

Before, however, passing on to the next vicar, it will be interesting to give a specimen of the parish accounts during the time of Mr. Kaye as kept by him :—

The Churchwardings Accounts for the year 1697 :—	£	s.	d.
To a Minister's Wife & seaven childn	0	1	0
To ye Prisoners in York Castle ...	0	1	0
To a man yt lost his corn & goods by seabreak	0	0	6

Spen with our neighbouring ministers wn they preach'd	0	2	6
For ringing on the day of thanksgiving	0	4	0
For splicing Bell Ropes	0	0	6
For ringing fift of November ...	0	8	0
To a poor Minister	0	0	6
For ringing on New years day ...	0	0	6
To two poor Scholars	0	0	2
To two men that lost all by seabreak	0	1	0
To a dumb man	0	0	2
To a poor man who had wife and children and nothing to live on (1700)	0	0	2

The mention of several persons who lost their property "by seabreak," reminds us of the constant encroachments of the sea on the eastern coast of Yorkshire, by which whole villages, with their churches and churchyards, have been swept away; and the tide now rises and falls, and stately ships sail by, where once the corn waved, and cottages smiled in the sunshine, and congregations gathered to the sound of the church-going bell. On some of our maps we still read such melancholy notices as these: "Here stood Auburn, which was washed away by the sea;" "Hartburn, washed away;" "Hyde, washed away."

The Day of Thanksgiving, referred to above, was probably for the Treaty of Ryswick, October 29th, 1697. when William III. of England, and Louis XIV. of France, and the other contending powers, agreed to allow Europe to enjoy, for a brief space, the blessings of peace. How thankful our country felt for this respite from the burden of war, may be gathered from the heartiness with which the good people even of this remote parish took to the ringing of their bells, which must have been going most of the day, if we may judge from the quantity of ale consumed in the belfry, and the shattered state of the ropes when the rejoicings were over!—the next item in the accounts being "for splicing the the bell-ropes." The ringers had now got their hand in, and went to work with a will on "the Fift of November," when their Protestant feeling appears to have been even more strongly indulged than their patriotic thankfulness for the peace—at all events twice as much ale was allowed for the day's work! But in those days, when King James II. was still alive, and the exiled dynasty, and with it the Roman Catholic religion, might possibly be restored, there must have been a depth and reality in the rejoicings of the Fifth of November, which are wanting now; although the very same bells still ring every year to celebrate the defeat of the "Popish conspiracy." The fact, also, of the arrival in England of King William III. on this same day was yet fresh in the memories of the people. So loyalty to the king, and zeal for the Church, found a noisier utterance than usual in the ringing of this Fifth of November. It is pleasant to think that our good domestic vicar was a staunch supporter of King William and the reformed Church of England.

His immediate successor, Mr Massey, whom I have distinguished by the name of the energetic vicar, held the living for only six years. He appears to have been unmarried, and having no family cares, to have devoted himself to Church improvements. For the "new vicar," as he is called, had no sooner come into residence, than he held a meeting for the purpose of obtaining fresh parish books and registers. The next year, the "great bell" was mended; the seats at Church were re-arranged, and the bells were hung with great rejoicings. A new surplice was obtained, and greater decency was secured in the services of the Church, by the appointment of a dog-whipper! Two years after the steeple was pointed, the roof having previously been attended to. The following year was signalized by a general "beautyfieing" of the fabric; and in the last year of our energetic vicar's life, the "church-bridge" was restored.

The following extracts from the parish accounts, as kept by Mr. Massey, cannot fail to interest the reader:—

1704.

The Accounts of Thomas Shilleto & Thomas Stothard, Churchwardens for ye ear 1704:—

	£	s.	d.
Impr for Bread & Wine at Whitsunday	00	09	02
To Robert Barker for Sheepsshanks for hanging ye Tiles ...	00	02	06
Spent wn Mr Massey came 1st to Kirkby	00	02	00
Spent upon the new Vicar ...	00	01	00
Spent at a meeting abt ye Parish books and Register	00	01	00
To James Wiggins for a spade & shovel	00	03	00
Given ye Ringers upon ye Victory at Hochstat in Bavaria	00	02	00
Spent on ye 5th of Novembr ...	00	02	06
For nales to mend ye Bier ...	00	00	02

1705.

	£	s.	d.
Spent wn ye Great bell was mended & wn ye others were bargained to be repaired	00	03	00
Paid for advice about ye seats in ye church	00	00	06
Spent wn ye Bells were hung ...	00	07	00
Spent at ye Perambulation ...	00	16	00
Paid for a new surplice	02	16	00
Paid Rich: Richardson for whipping ye dogs out of church... ...	00	03	00

1706.

	£	s.	d.
To ye Dog Whipper	00	03	00
To ye Ringers on a day of Thanksgiving	00	03	00
Paid on a ringing day (Ramilies?)	00	08	06

1707.

Spent at ye Letting of ye Steeple to be pointed	00	02	00
Paid ye workmen for doing it by agreement	03	00	00
Paid Ringers on Thanksgiving day	00	01	06

1708.

Paid for Beautyfieing ye Church	08	00	00

1709.

Paid to Ringers Thanksgiving day	00	02	06
Paid for mending the Church-bridge going to Ulleskelf	00	02	06

1710.

Paid for Ale when strangers preached	0	5	6
To 3 poor men one of wch came when Mr Massey was buried ...	0	1	0

A few remarks may be appended to the foregoing extracts.

The "sheepshanks" used for hanging the tiles or slates on the roof of the church were well suited for the purpose, being more durable than wooden pins. Some of them were actually found in their places when the church was restored in 1860.

The special mention of the "Victory at Hochstat in Bavaria," better known as the battle of Blenheim, is highly interesting. "It was a famous victory," and the sensation it created in the world extended even to this out-of-the-way village, which was not too far off for the ripple of excitement to reach it, and set the bells a ringing in proud exultation.

And other victories followed in such quick succession that it was no wonder the bells required repairing. Those were glorious days for England, but they weighed rather heavily on the country parishes, what with the paying of the ringers, the splicing of the ropes, and the mending of the bells, not to mention the trifle they added to the National debt!

With regard to the payment made for the "beautyfieing" of the church, we may be allowed to question the appropriateness of the term used, and even to indulge a wish that our good vicar's energy had been expended in other directions. If to build an unsightly porch—with a horizontal beam of wood instead of an arch—in front of a Norman doorway, special care being taken to conceal the ancient ornamentation, is to "beautyfie" a church, then our active-minded vicar succeeded admirably in his purpose. And if to pebble-dash the tower from top to bottom, and to insert sash windows in the nave, and to darken the interior with a heavy gallery, are improvements in eccelesiastical architecture, then a great mistake was committed when all this "beautyfieing" was carefully undone at our recent restoration.

That is a sad but pleasing entry about the "poor man who came when Mr. Massey was buried." In vain we wonder why and whence he came. He must have come out of real love, for the vicar was dead. Perhaps he had met with some great kindness from the departed minister, or received the living Word from his lips, and wished to show his gratitude by attending as a mourner at his funeral. Our vicar could scarcely have shown so much zeal for church improvements, with out possessing a real desire to do his people good. When we see the scaffolding we expect also to see the edifice rising within. Let us hope that the spiritual building was helped forward by the labours of our energetic vicar, and that the "poor man who came when he was buried" was one of many who received benefit from his ministry. It is only such spiritual results of our labours that bear the stamp of immortality.

But we must pass on to our methodical vicar, Mr. Richard Sugden, who held the living from 1711 to 1727. The registers and accounts were kept with a neatness and exactness which are quite remarkable. His handwriting is beautiful. He drew up a list of the early vicars of the parish, which may still be seen at the end of one of the oldest registers, with every little particular he could glean respecting each of them. The parish accounts were most accurately kept by him, and contain many interesting and graphic allusions. I proceed to give a few extracts :—

1711.

	£	s.	d.
Gave to some who had lost their estates (as they said) by seabreach, 6d; to a fat man, 6d.	0	1	0
Gave to a ragged seaman, 2d ; to two other seamen, 4d ; to some other seamen, 1s. 8d.	0	2	2
Paid to Thomas Pawson for awakening those who sleep in Church and whipping dogs out of it	0	4	0

The last amusing entry reminds us of George Herbert's remark, that "country people are thick and heavy, and need a mountain of fire to kindle them." But it must have been dangerous in those days for anyone to indulge in a nap at church, when an official was appointed to go about with a formidable whip in his hand, which he might apply indiscriminately to intruding dogs or drowsy parishioners.

1712.	£	s.	d,
Pd at several times for vermine caught and destroyed	0	0	6

To Mr Brown a wandring minister	0	1	0
Gave to a poor man who lost his goods by Murrain	0	0	8
To two seamen one whereof had his wife with him	0	0	4
To the Ringers on July 7th, being the Day of Thanksgiving for the Peace, 3s; and expended on them & others on the same day 6s 6d. more; in all ...	0	9	6

However the country had rejoiced over Marlborough's victories, they were more thankful still for the peace which put an end to them. The sum expended in this little parish on the Day of Thanksgiving for the peace which was ratified at Utrecht was doubtless a true indication of the general feeling of relief throughout the country at the conclusion of the war.

It is interesting to notice the mention of the murrain or cattle plague which raged in the year 1712.

1714.	£	s.	d.
To the Ringers on the King's Coronation day	0	3	0

1715.	£	s.	d.
For a filmart's head, 2d; to the Ringers on Account of the Victory at Preston, 3s.	0	3	2

Could anything be more matter-of-fact or else more satirical than this singular entry? The head of a stoat and the head of the

Pretender were evidently of about equal value in the eyes of our methodical vicar; for the "filmart's" death and the Pretender's ruin, through the surrender of the rebels at Preston, in Lancashire, are both dismissed in a single line, and the two items of expense for the "vermine" thus "caught and destroyed" summed up together. What did it matter to the loyal vicar of Kirkby how many misguided gentlemen forfeited their heads for him they deemed their king?

> "A hundred nailed
> Like weasels to the gates of each wall'd town,"

would not ruffle the composure of his methodical mind.

1716.	£	s.	d.
Paid for three Filmart's heads ...	0	0	6
To the glazier for mending the Church windows shattered by the wind ...	0	4	6
1717.			
To Mr Leedes's servt for two Otter's heads	0	1	0
For a Badger's head to Edward Hazelgrave	0	0	6

Filmarts, stoats, and weasels, may still be found in sufficient abundance in this or any parish, but otters have long ceased to ascend the little streams, and badgers have been extirpated by the progress of cultivation. The appearance of a new Pretender would scarcely create a greater sensation in the parish than the sight of an otter or badger now-a-days.

1719.	£	s.	d.
Spent on Easter day when the Churchwardens din'd with Mr Sugden	0	1	0
1720.			
Wood for Altar-Rails to Madam Leedes	0	10	0

This was some curious old carved oak of the Tudor period, which still adorns the church.

1722.	£	s.	d.
To Mr Sugden for scouring Church-plate, transcribing Register and copying these accounts	0	7	0

After this Mr. Sugden's handwriting ceases. His death is thus minutely recorded :—

"Richard Sudgen, M.A.; Vicar of K. Wharfe & Minister of Saxton dyde January ye 19th between the hours of 6 and 7 at night & was Buried January ye 22nd 1727 by Mr Lowther."

There only now remains to be noticed the litigious vicar, Robert Kitching, who died in 1788, after a ministry of thirty-two years. I have often conversed with an old parishioner who remembered him, and described him as a little, lame man, and a good preacher. The parish accounts in his time are slovenly and uninteresting, and we find no allusious to passing historical events—no echo, however faint, of the mighty strugglss which convulsed the world; but our choleric vicar has left us in his private account-book an animated description of a tithe trouble which vexed his soul for several successsive years. The loss of a small portion of the vicarial tithes lay heavier on his heart than the defection of the North American provinces. I give the following quotation as characteristic of a state of feeling which was probably not uncommon between different portions of the society of that period :—

"Memorandum :—In the year 1781 was sown about 6 acres of a dying weed called wold, or woulds, in the west end of Kirby Moor, and pull'd in July and August 1782. The Vicar, Robt Kitching, being informed by the Growers that it was a small or Vicarial Tithe, discharged Faith Allen, Farmer of the Great Tithes, from meddling with it ; notwithstanding which, she ordered her son and servants to take it and lead it by force, in spite of whatever he could say or do, he having tithed it by order of the Growers ; but she took all the crop that grew upon two lands into the Tithe Barn. This is a strange and arbitrary way of proceeding !

"N.B. The Vicar proposed (as a disputed point) to let it rest with the Growers, till determined by him and Mr. Geo. Finch Hatton, Lessee of the "Great Tithes," and accordingly wrote twice to Mr Hatton about it, but did not receive any answer. This behaviour is like the rest, and though a Member of Parliament, far from a Gentlemanlike Behavr : but he says, 'The Clergy are the Pest of the Nation' !

"N.B. John Johnson of Hoyland, Mr Hatton's ste vard, wrote me a very impertinent note upon a scrap of paper, before I or he had wrote to his Master :—('Why do you not commence suit against me? I ordered Allen to take the Tithe of Woulds, &c.')

"N.B. On Wedy, Decr 18th, 1782, the Vicar gave Will. Allen a pretty severe Lecture at Tadcaster about taking the Tithe of the Woulds in an arbitrary manner, and spoiling the Vicarage of it by violence: he said, 'Johnson order'd 'em to take it.'—'Suppose Johnson had order'd you to steal my mare, who was to be hang'd for it?'—'Johnson,' he said, 'had received a letter from his Master, who said they had done right to take it.'—'Ay,' said I, 'right or wrong! only get possession.'—'The Law is open,' said Allen.—'Yes, and if I was to have a trial for 30s., I should prove myself as big a Fool as others are Rogues!'

"N.B. Line and Rape I suppose have been taken in the same arbitrary manner by Finch's Family, Lessees of the Great Tithes only, belonging to the Prebend of Wetwang, and thereby deprived the Vicarage of its right.

"14th August, 1782.—I wrote to Mr Hatton and offered to refer it to Counsel, if it appeared doubtful: he did not give any answer.

"2 November, 1782,—I wrote again and offered to refer it to his own Honour, if he pleas'd to give an impartial, unbiass'd opinion—he did not give any answer.

"4th June, 1783.—I threatened to order a writt for Faith Allen for taking the wold, and claim'd the Tithes of Rape, Line, Turnips, and Clover seed of John Johnson, Steward to Mr Hatton, and discharg'd 'em from meddling with 'em in future.

"21 June, 1783.—Mr Hatton sent me a Letter that he was ready to defend any action I chose to bring against him or any of his Tenants, and that he had ordered his Solicitor to retain the Solicitor General, Mr Lee. This appears to be intended to intimidate me from proceeding, and is not the behaviour of a Gentleman."

How small a matter our poor vicar's annoyance appears now! How we smile at his injured feelings, and wonder at his trouble about this "dying weed called wold!" It might help us to bear our daily burden better, if we were sometimes to consider what will be thought of it a hundred years hence. Nay, many a care that frets our minds to-day, will be forgotten by this time next year. "Why make we such ado?" "Why do we not rather take wrong?" Why do we so often "kick against the pricks," and chafe and struggle through "the days of the years of our pilgrimage?"

But it is time to close the lid of our Parish Register Chest, and to bring our discursive chronicles to an end. During the nine years I was the appointed guardian of these ancient documents, they were so frequently in my hands, that I became very familiar with them. And in leaving the parish, amidst many natural regrets for my dear people, and beautiful Church, and cherished home, and favourite haunts, I was not unconscious of a pang in surrendering to my successor the care of my Parish Register Chest.

Perhaps I may be permitted to conclude,

by quoting a Sonnet, published by me elsewhere, as embodying in a few words the leading sentiment of this paper :

ON MY PARISH REGISTER CHEST.

IN the scant compass of this iron chest
  Lie the brief records of three hundred years,
  The mute memorials of their smiles and tears;
Here side by side ten generations rest,
As with Time's iron hand together prest;
  A catalogue of names all that appears—
  Faded their joys, forgotton are their fears,
And all the eager hopes they once possest.
With mournful mind I turn the yellow pages,
  Read the dim notice of a long-past wedding—
    How one was born, and over-leaf was buried;
Thus swift and silent pass successive ages,
  Like autumn-trees their leaves for ever [shedding,
    Which into vast Eternity are hurried.

RICHARD WILTON, M.A.

The Wakefield Mysteries.

The great and increasing popularity of the religious drama in this country was very distinctly shewn about the end of the thirteenth century, by the rise and rapid consolidation of those remarkable dramatic cycles which form so noteworthy a feature in the early history of the English stage. What is known as a dramatic cycle was made up of a number of separate plays dealing with the different episodes of sacred history, but so welded together as to form, when taken in continuity, a complete dramatic presentation of the course of human destiny, as it appeared to the mediæval thinker. The various cycles were constructed in slightly different ways; for the component pieces varied in number, and sometimes one Biblical incident was taken, and sometimes another, according to the taste and intentions of each particular author. But all over England, the main lines of argument everywhere remained the same. The cycle commenced with the creation of the world; ran roughly through the most remarkable facts of Jewish story; dealt more particularly with the doings and miracles of Christ; with the trial, crucifixion, and resurrection; and closed with a prophetic picture of the Last Judgment. However they might differ in detail, the various collections thus agreed in their general tendencies; and were, moreover, at one in their teachings, and in the way in which, according to the circumscribed views of things then current, they did their best to

> "Assert Eternal Providence,
> And justify the ways of God to men."

We know that many of the most important English towns, such as Chester, Coventry, Newcastle, and York, had their own particular collections, and several of these have come down in manuscript to our own time, and constitute some of the most valuable literary heirlooms of the middle ages. Among them, not the least important is the set of plays anciently performed at "Merry Wakefield," a few remarks concerning which may prove of some interest to our readers.

This collection is generally known as the Towneley or Widkirk collection. Neither of these names is entirely satisfactory. The former, indeed, is applied with some show of reason, as the manuscript containing the plays was preserved in the library of Towneley Hall, in Lancashire; but the latter title, which is still in common use, appears to have arisen out of a pure mistake. In 1814

Francis Douce, the well-known antiquary, following what seems to have been a tradition in the Towneley family, stated that the plays "formerly belonged to the Abbey of Widkirk, near Wakefield, in the County of York." Further study of the facts, however, has led to the conclusion that there never was any abbey, or even any place of the name Widkirk (or Wildkirk, as the word was sometimes written) in the neighbourhood of Wakefield, or, indeed, anywhere else in England. Widkirk is probably nothing more than a corrupted form of Woodkirk; by which name, on account of its little church of wood, West Ardsley was frequently designated. There was at Woodkirk a cell of Austin Friars, or Black Canons as they were called from their peculiar dress, in dependance upon the great house at Nostel, in the deanery of Pontefract;* and here from an early date there had been periodic gatherings of a semi-religious, semi-commercial character, such as we frequently read about in the chronicles of the middle ages. "King Stephen," says Burton, "granted the Canons a charter for two annual fairs at this place, the one to be held two days before, and on the assumption of the blessed Virgin Mary; the other two days before

* See John Burton's Monasticon Eboracense, p. 300.

the Nativity of St. Mary, and on that day."† With a praiseworthy desire for the edification of the masses, and I am afraid we must add, with an eye to interests of a more personal and secular nature, the old monks were everywhere accustomed, on the occasion of such gatherings of the people, to give specially elaborate performances of religious plays—taking for their theme the doings of the particular saint to which their abbey was dedicated, or certain incidents of more general religious history. At these semi-annual fairs, therefore, instituted in connection with the cell of Austin Friars at Woodkirk, the canons soon sought to improve the occasion by introducing the performance of religious mysteries, and in so doing were only acting in accordance with the general spirit of the age. Thus there grew up in time the great cycle of plays to which we here refer, and which, on the analogy furnished by other similar collections, should properly be called, not the Towneley or Woodkirk, but the Wakefield Mysteries.

The manuscript in which these plays have come down to our time is undated, but the best authorities concur in assigning it to the fifteenth century. But the date of the manuscript does not, of course, fix the period at

† Burton, p. 309.

which the plays themselves were first performed; and it is believed that for the earliest representations we may go back to the beginning of the fourteenth century, if not even earlier. That the Wakefield cycle long remained popular is beyond all doubt. Indeed, in one of the plays which deals with the subject of St. John the Baptist, and which is itself of later authorship than the greater part of the contents of the collection, a passage in honour of the Seven Sacraments is scored out, and marked in the margin as "corrycted and not played." This of course clearly points to the fact that the representations went on down to the very period of the Reformation.

The contents of the series form a most interesting subject for study, for the various plays are upon the whole lively and sufficiently well written, and are not so stiff and formal as most of those contained in the other collections. Moreover, the purely dramatic element is more than usually strong; and there are not wanting traces of a boisterous, animal, north-country humour which, however strangely it may sometimes blend with the more serious stuff of which the argument is composed, is not without significance when considered in connection with the strong, and often grossly humorous side of the later English drama. These plays were evidently from the very first prepared with a special eye to the public before which they were to be performed; they were meant to strike home to the common intelligence of the unlettered masses—to be popular in the fullest sense of the term. Hence their tone is throughout that of coarse, everyday life; matching oddly, as we may sometimes think with the solemn and sacred incidents which they unfold, but doubtless endearing them in no small measure to those who crowded round the little wooden stage to wonder or to laugh, as the case might be.

This popular intention, noticeable enough throughout, is brought home to us particularly by the fact that the plays are written in Northern dialect, and are so full of provincial words, phrases, and idioms, that they form by no means easy reading for the uninitiated Southron. Many of the expressions which would puzzle a general student, are still used in the same senses in the West Riding of Yorkshire at the present day: a fact which shows how tenacious of life vulgar speech may often be, amid all the changes and modifications to which language at large is ever subject. In the study of these miracle plays, and of all other similar productions of the middle ages, it must ever be borne in mind that they were composed and performed at a time when reading and writing were very rare accomplishments; when even barons and noblemen were generally unable to sign their names; when knowledge by the great avenue of printed books was "quite shut out;" and when, so far as the masses were concerned, oral instruction was alone possible. Hence the place filled by such religious dramas as those in question, was much larger than is sometimes supposed; and hence, also, the fact that the language used in composition approached more nearly to the vulgar every-day speech of the common people than might at first sight seem fitting, considering the nature of the subjects dealt with.

The representation of such a cycle as that now under consideration lasted generally from morning till night, and occasionally extended over two or three days, or even more. It must not, however, be supposed that the whole work of such a performance rested with one body of actors. The plays were divided among the various town-guilds, or companies, each guild taking up one special portion of the cycle, and devoting all its attention to that alone. As one company finished that part of the performance which had been entrusted to its care, the company next in order of rotation came forward to take its place; and thus, scene by scene, the whole cycle was played through. In the case of several of these dramatic collections, we know exactly by what companies the different plays were given, and sometimes we find a singular appropriateness in the assignment; as, for instance, in the case of the Flood-play in the Chester Mysteries, which was represented by the water-drawers of the Dee. Regarding the Wakefield collection, our information is not so complete, as the names of only three of the guilds —the Barkers (i.e., tanners), the Glovers, and the Fishers—have come down to us in the manuscript. But we are perfectly safe in arguing from the analogies furnished by other cycles, and in stating that the Wakefield plays, like those of other places, were periodically performed by the trade companies of the town.

The Wakefield cycle consists of thirty-two plays, of which eight are taken from the Old Testament, and twenty-four from the New. In choice of subject, these pieces exhibit no particular originality. The series, as usual, leads off with the Creation of the world, after which we are presented with the death of Abel, the Flood, the Sacrifice of Abraham, the histories of Isaac and Jacob, the *Pro-*

cessus Prophetarum, or pageant of those who had prophesied concerning Christ; and the tyranny and punishment of Pharoah. This closes the Old Testament division, for we spring at once from the crossing of the Red Sea to the time when Cæsar Augustus, sitting in state upon his throne, is warned

> "That a qweyn * here, in this land,
> Shall bere a chyld I wene,
> That shall be crowned Kyng lyfand. †
> * * * * *
> These tythynges doth me teyne." ‡

With the usual disregard for chronological accuracy, Cæsar, like other Pagan characters in the old mysteries, swears frequently by Mahomme, or Mohammed; and, in general, behaves himself like one of the mediæval "paynims," or Saracens, with whom the Holy Wars had made English people familiar. This play, which opens the New Testament series, is followed by the Annunciation, the salutation of Elizabeth, two pageants dealing with the angels' visits to the watching shepherds, the

* i.e. Woman; Danish Qvinde (in which the d is not pronounced). As applied indifferently to any member of the female sex, this word has almost gone out of use, but it still lingers in the opprobrious "quean."

† i.e. Living. In these plays the present participle often retains the old Anglo-Saxon termination—AND.

‡ Teen—grief, sorrow. Tythynges in the same line is, of course, tidings.

offering of the Magi, the flight of the Holy Family into Egypt, the slaughter of the Innocents (in which, again, "moste myghty Mahomme" plays a considerable part), the Purification of the Virgin, the scene between the boy Jesus and the doctors in the temple at Jerusalem, and the story of John the Baptist. Here we come to another large gap. The teachings and actions of Christ during the time of his public career, did not furnish nearly such striking matter for dramatic treatment as the miraculous events recorded concerning his birth, and the terribly tragic scenes amid which his brief ministry was brought to a close. Passing over in silence, therefore, the greater part of his public life, the early dramatists came at once to the "beginning of the end;" and the plays which follow are all elaborated with great minuteness of detail and almost repulsive realism. There is the conspiracy against Jesus, and his capture ; the trial, the scourging, and the crucifixion, and the scene in which the soldiers cast lots for the raiment and quarrel about its distribution. Then we have the release of the Spirits from Hell, consequent upon Christ's triumphant descent, the Resurrection, the journey to Emmaus, the scepticism of Thomas, and the Ascension. Finally we are presented with a symbolic representation of the Last Judgment, with

Christ as Judge upon his throne, and his foes subject at his feet. This, in the usual way, was evidently intended to end the cycle. In the Townley manuscript, however, there are appended a play on the subject of Lazarus, and a speech of Judas when he hangs himself. But these are clearly out of sequence, and are without doubt the additions of a later hand.

Such, very briefly, are the contents of the Wakefield cycle of mystery plays; and, as I have said, they differ but little in subject-matter from the contents of similar collections still extant. But in language, style, and treatment, the Wakefield series is distinguished from others in many remarkable ways; and most of all by a dramatic rapidity of movement, a vigour of dialogue, and a free and homely realism, which contrast favourably with the rigid conventionality of the religious drama at large. The characters might bear the names of the sacred personages whom they were supposed to represent; and they might enact, one by one, the scenes of the solemn tragedy, which, beginning with the creation and ending with the consummation of all things, took in the whole sweep of human history so far as it was then understood. But none the less were they in reality the common figures of everyday life, drawn from types, and embodying ideas, with which the populace were perfectly at home. Even the Divine Ruler of all things, whom, without thought of evil, the old dramatists brought in proper person on to the stage, was little more than a mediæval bishop or pope; while Herod and Cæsar were Saracens; Elizabeth, a good gossiping housewife; and Cain, with his rough voice, coarse language, and burly manners, nothing more nor less than a Yorkshire ploughman of the most familiar and least desirable type. And it was inevitable that this should be so. A religion drawn from an alien race—a narrative made up of strange events and reflecting foreign manners and mode of thought—could have but little hold upon the people at large if they had not been coloured by every day thoughts and feelings. Thus it was that one cannot help realising that, though the characters belong to a different nationality, and though the mystic significance of the cycle separates it once and for all from the ordinary routine of common human existence, it is none the less the spirit and the life of mediæval Yorkshire, with its provincialisms of thought, manner, expression, which breathe through and inform the whole.

All this is most noticeable in those

portions of the series in which the humorous element has the freest play. In the scenes between Cain and his plough-boy, full as they are of rough and boisterous fun, there is little indeed to remind us that we are treading on what is currently held as sacred ground. Similarly when Noah quarrels with his wife, who upbraids him in no measured terms; when the two have a regular stand up tussle; and when after the ark is built, and she refuses to enter it, her devoted husband beats her black and blue, we cannot fail to see how thoroughly the Biblical narrative is transformed and how completely it takes the tone and manner of rustic English life. More strikingly, however, is this change shown in the second of the two plays dealing with the subject of the shepherds, In this we lose sight altogether of the Jewish hills, of the clear eastern night, of the staid and solemn-visaged Hebrews watching their flocks in the starry silence, and presently aroused from their meditations by the glory of angelic visitants, and the sounds of celestial song. In place of all this, we have a rough-and-ready farce, full of broad jokes and quaint allusions; redolent of English out-door life, and reflecting with wonderful fidelity the daily experiences of the Yorkshire common folk. Such a play may ill-satisfy our nineteenth century cravings for "local-colouring," but it is as interesting when taken as a picture of contemporary manner, as it is valuable when considered as a forerunner of the humorous element of the great secular drama of later times.

The Wakefield Mysteries have, I think, received less attention than they deserve. Other cycles, such as those of Coventry, and Chester, have their special claims upon our notice; but in none of them does the free heart-blood of the English people flow so freely—in none of them does the voice of mediæval England speak out in such clear and natural tones as in this northern collection. For the inhabitants of "merry Wakefield"—some among whom may be the descendants of men and women who stood laughing or wondering round the little stage on which these performances were given—these plays must indeed have a special fascination. But their importance is far from being merely local. Regarded alike as representing the most independent application of dramatic treatment to sacred subjects, and as furnishing the fullest prophecy of that great burst of genius which was by and by to culminate in Shakespeare, the Wakefield cycle is perhaps the most interesting and valuable remnant we possess of the great religious drama of the middle ages.

WILLIAM HENRY HUDSON.

A Biographical Romance.

In the olden days the misfortunes of William Swan frequently formed the topic of conversation amongst friends, who gathered round the fireside in the homes on the wild wolds of Yorkshire, where he spent some years of his disappointed life. The full details of his career have been lost in the lapse of time; never, to our knowledge, have they been committed to paper, but sufficient particulars may be brought together to prove in his case the truth of the old saying that "fact is stranger than fiction."

Nearly two centuries ago there was joy in Benwell Hall, near Newcastle-on-Tyne, the stately mansion of Richard Swan, Esq., the occasion of the rejoicing being the birth of an heir. The parents dreamed of a bright future for their boy, and proudly predicted that he would, in a worthy manner, perpetuate the name and fame of Swan. The happy expectations of boyhood were not to be realised, for the young heir had barely reached the age of nine years, when he was kidnapped from his home, in order that another might inherit the wealth that by kinship belonged to him. He was quietly shipped on board the "New Britannia" brig, which formed part of the squadron under command of the famous Sir Cloudesley Shovel. His position was that of a "powder monkey," and his chief employment was to bring powder from the magazine to the gunners during the naval engagements. On the 22nd of October, 1707, the fleet was wrecked on the Scilly Isles, owing to the Admiral mistaking the rocks for the sea-coast. No less than eight hundred brave men found a watery grave, and several vessels were lost. Happily the ship in which Swan sailed escaped destruction. Ill-fate, however, followed in its wake, for, shortly afterwards, it was captured by an Algerine Corsair, and Swan was sold to the Moors as a slave. Four weary years were passed in Barbary. He gained his liberty through the assistance of the Redeeming Friars, a noble body of men who were the means of freeing thousands of Christians from captivity. Many benevolent persons left large sums of money for redeeming their fellow countrymen from bondage, and this money was expended judiciously though the agency of the Friars.

Swan had not the good fortune to reach his home in safety. He was again taken prisoner and sold once more into slavery, this time to an English planter in South

Carolina. Here his sufferings were terrible. He toiled with negroes from sunrise to sunset, the slave-drivers keeping them busily at work in the cotton and sugar plantations by means of the lash. Managing to escape, he landed, after an exile of twenty years, on his native shore in 1726, and speedily made his way to Newcastle-on-Tyne. His father's footman, Thomas Chance, and his old nurse, Mrs Gofton, identified him, and he at once instituted a claim for the estate of his uncle, Alderman Swan, Mayor of Hull, who had died and left property yielding an income of £20,000 a year. His efforts proved unsuccessful, and the deep disappointment broke his heart, his death occurring in 1736 at the age of 38 years.

Swan had married a Yorkshire woman called Jane Cole, of North Dalton, near Driffield, by whom he had a son named William. The widowed mother told her boy, as soon as he was able to understand, that he was the rightful heir to vast estates, and encouraged him to persevere to obtain them. The melancholy fate of her husband was not sufficient to crush her ardent spirit. A lawyer at Driffield was consulted, and he advised that action be taken. He undertook to conduct the case without payment until the estates were obtained, beyond the sums for correspondence, court fees, &c. The man, however, drained the poor fellow of every penny that he could procure, and both mother and son denied themselves the necessaries of life to keep up the constant demands of the solicitor. Months and years passed without getting any satisfaction. Poor Mrs Swan at last felt the case to be hopeless, and the anxious waiting with its disappointing results preyed so on her mind, that she fell into ill-health and died. Speaking to her son before her death she said: "Oh, William, let this horrid plea drop. Don't pay that man any more money. I feel that he would skin us both alive. They are a bad set all these law men." William was young, and like the majority of young people, hope was firmly fixed in his nature. He not only devoted all his money to law, but bought a second-hand copy of "Blackstone's Commentaries," and spent all his leisure time in studying it, until he was completely master of the work. After the death of his mother, he gave up house-keeping and took lodgings with a widow, having a daughter about twenty-four years of age. They became interested in his case and lent him money to carry on his suit. A rich uncle had left the girl a few hundred pounds. The young couple were brought into sympathy with each other, which ripened into mutual affection, and in a short time, with the consent freely given of the mother, they were married, Shortly after the wedding it transpired that the attorney at Driffield had been cheating his client, and instead of using the hard earned money of William Swan to gain his estates, he had spent it in dissipation, and was a ruined man.

Swan proceeded to London, and consulted another lawyer. This man advised an action which swallowed up the wife's small fortune, without getting them one step nearer obtaining the estate. Trouble after trouble came upon William. His heart was almost crushed, but he continued the action to the best of his ability. His wife begged of him to leave law alone, and return to their Yorkshire home to live by their industry, and give up all thoughts of the property, but he could not act upon her good advice. He got into debt and was committed to the Fleet prison on his inability to pay. Here ill luck still followed him, for he caught the jail fever. In his sickness his devoted wife got permission to visit him, and bring some delicacies to him. She, alas, caught the fever, and in a few days died. He recovered, but the death of his loving helpmate was almost too much for him. She had endured much for his sake, but never by word or deed showed regret at becoming his wife. Shortly afterwards a jail delivery enabled him to leave prison. His illness rendered him so weak that he could hardly walk. He obtained lodgings in an obscure lane or alley near Chiswell-street, London, and afterwards was found dead in bed. It is believed that his remains were buried in a pauper's grave.

WILLIAM ANDREWS, F.R.H.S.

Some Scraps and Shreds of Yorkshire Superstition.

It has been truly remarked that this latter decade of the Nineteeth Century is witnessing the rapid decline and fall of many old customs and habits, and many strange beliefs, and the superstitions which have held their ground from time immemorial. In almost every nook and corner of our isle we stumble upon some of these scraps and shreds of "stubborn antiquity," but in no part of England do we find the prevalence of strange old world customs and usages more widely spread, and at the same time more deeply rooted, than in the historic county of Yorkshire, particularly in those Divisions known as the North and East Ridings. A close inspection of these various masses of superstition will reveal much that is legendary, and mythical in their character, much that is the outcome of the imagination, and still more of what may certainly be termed "Heathenism in Disguise." Some breathe a deep religious feeling, others again are full of light and peaceful fancy, while a third class, and by far the most numerous, are gross, vulgar, and even cruel. During the past ten years much interest has been evinced in these studies, and the establishment of a Society for systematically collecting and classifying the remains of our folk-lore, satisfactorily proves that great importance is attached to the subject. We propose within the limits of this short article, bringing under the notice of our readers a *few* of the many superstitions pertaining to Yorkshire, which the ruthless hand of old Father Time has hitherto been prevented from consigning to 'the limbo vast and wide' of oblivion.

To begin with, let us glance for a while at Marriages, and with this stage of human existence what a vast store of superstition is bound up! In the East Riding we are told when a bride arrives at her father's door a plate of cake is always flung from an upper window upon the crowd beneath. Much importance is attached to the fate which attends this plate; the greater number of pieces it breaks into, the greater will be the bride's happiness, but should the plate fall to the ground unbroken it forebodes misfortune. Formerly when a wedding was solemnized in the Yorkshire Dales, the friends of the bridegroom were accustomed to dance round the bride, shouting and firing volleys from guns which they carried with them. At

Guisborough in Cleveland, it was the practice to fire guns over the heads of the newly married couple all the way home from church. In the same village it was customary for the bridegroom to present a handful of money, together with the wedding ring to the parson, who, out of this sum, took his fees and then returned the overplus. It is related that in a certain village in Yorkshire, the marriage ceremony was once performed by a strange clergyman from the South of England, who, at the conclusion of the service, was much astonished at finding the party keeping together as if waiting for something to come. "What are you waiting for?" he enquired at length. "Please, sir," was the honest bridegroom's reply. "Ye have no kissed Molly." It was afterwards explained that it was the privilege of the parson who tied the matrimonial knot, to "salute the bride" with a kiss. There is another old wedding usage confined to Yorkshire. We refer to the singular custom of pouring a kettle of boiling water over the doorstep directly the bride has left the paternal roof; the old wives saying that before the step is dry another marriage will be agreed upon. The ancient custom of throwing an old shoe after the wedding party, called by the peasantry in many remote districts "trashing," is believed to propitiate success. Henderson, the indefatigable antiquary, informs us that the "grand finale" of a Yorkshire wedding should take the form of a race for a ribbon. In Cleveland the ribbon is given by the bridegroom, as he leaves the church, and then all who feel so inclined join in the general race for it in sight of the house where the wedding feast is to be held. All the racers, winner and losers alike, are each entitled to a glass of wine, and accordingly as soon as the race is over, they do not fail to present themselves at the house and clamour for their reward.

Yorkshire has a very peculiar way of ascertaining who will be summoned from this world. Those who are anxious for information concerning the death of their fellow parishioners keep watch in the old church porch on St. Mark's Eve, April 25th, for an hour on each side of midnight, for three years in succession. In the third year it is believed that the watchers behold the ghosts of those doomed to die within the year passing "in grim array" one by one into the church. Should the watcher himself, by any chance whatever, fall asleep during his midnight vigil, he will certainly meet with an untimely end. A story is told of an old woman at Scarborough, who kept St. Mark's

Eve in the porch of St. Mary's Church in that town during the closing years of last century. Figure after figure, it is said, glided into the Church, each one turning round to her as it went in, so that she was able to recognise their familiar faces. The last figure, however, turned and gazed steadfastly at her; then she knew herself, screamed aloud, and fell senseless to the ground. The neighbours discovered her in the Church porch the following morning, and carried her home, but she did not survive the shock. An old inhabitant of Fishlake, in the West Riding, was in the habit of regularly keeping St. Mark's vigils, and consequently became in course of time an object of great dread to his neighbours. Sextons were even known to keep these vigils in order, so it was said, to count the gains of the coming year. Another curious mode of divining into the future, formerly much resorted to in Yorkshire, was that known as "chaff riddling," and consisted of throwing the barn doors open at midnight, and procuring a "riddle" and chaff. This done, those wishing to unlock the secrets of the future went into the barn, and in turn commenced the process of "riddling," If the riddler himself was destined to die within that year, he saw two persons passing by the open barn doors carrying a coffin, but if not so fated he beheld nothing. A contributor of "Notes and Queries" tells us that once being on a visit at a village in Yorkshire, he was much amused one evening to find the servants of the house excusing themselves for being out of the way when the bell rung, on the plea that they had been "hailing the first new moon of the new year." The mysterious salutation was effected by means of a looking-glass, in which the first sight of the moon was to be had, and the object to be gained was the important secret as to how many years would elapse before the marriage of the observers. If one moon was seen in the glass, one year; if two, two years; and so on. In the case in question, the maid and the boy only saw one moon a-piece. In this county the dog has always been held as an object of superstitious regard. Formerly, a custom existed in the seaport of Hull of whipping all the dogs that were found running about the streets on the 10th of October, and so common was this practice at one time that every little Street Arab considered it his bounden duty to prepare a whip for any unlucky dog that might be seen wandering in the streets on that day. A correspondent of "Notes and Queries" says that tradition assigns the following origin to the custom:—Previous to the suppression of the monasteries in Hull, it was customary for the monks to provide liberally for the poor and wayfarers who visited the fair held annually on October 11th. Once, while the good brothers were making the necessary preparations on the day previous to the fair, a dog strolled into the larder, and on leaving snatched up a piece of meat and made off with it. The cooks instantly sounded the alarm, and when the dog got into the street, he was pursued by the hungry expectants of the charity of the monks, who were waiting outside the gates, and made to give up the stolen joint. After this occurrence, whenever a dog ventured to show his face during the annual feast preparations, he was invariably beaten off. In days gone by, a similar custom was observed at York, on St. Luke's Day, which from this circumstance came to be popularly designated "Whip-Dog-Day." Tradition asserts that centuries since as a priest was celebrating mass on St. Luke's festival, in a church at York, he accidentally dropped the host after consecration, which was instantly swallowed up by a dog couched under the altar. This act of profanation caused the dog's death, and inaugurated a persecution which was afterwards kept up on the anniversary of the day. A common Yorkshire superstition attaching to the ass is that the marks on its shoulders were given as everlasting memorials that our Saviour rode upon the animal. In the North Riding, according to Brand who mentions it in his "Popular Antiquities," these marks were in consequence of Baalam's striking it, and as a reproof to him and memento of his conduct.

Passing on now to the subject of "times and seasons," we shall find them marked in Yorkshire by many time-honoured customs. On Christmas Eve, for instance, in the West Riding it was formerly customary for children to carry from house to house figures of the Virgin and child in what were called "milly boxes," a corruption of the words, "My Lady." The boxes were filled with spice, oranges, and sugar, and the custom itself was termed "going a wassailing." Later in the evening the streets of many towns in the West Riding echoed with the old Christmas carol, "Christians awake, salute the happy morn," the singers, who were dressed in the most fanciful attire, being called "mummers." Throughout the district of Cleveland we are informed these mummers were accustomed te carry about with them a "vessel" cup, more properly called a "wassail cup," together with the figures of the Virgin and child already alluded to, and decked out with such ornaments as they were able to collect. To send them away without any remuneration whatever was believed to forfeit all the good luck for the whole year. No meat was at one time eaten in the same district on Christmas Eve, doubtless because it was one of the fasts of the Church. The supper there consisted of fruit tarts and furmety, or wheat boiled in milk, with spice and sugar. Towards the close of supper time the yule cake and cheese were cut and partaken of, while the "good man" of the house usually tapped a fresh cask of ale. At Horbury, near Wakefield, and at Dewsbury, we have been informed that the "devil's knell" was rung on Christmas Eve. This "knell" consisted of a hundred strokes in succession, after which a pause ensued, followed by nine strokes. Throughout Cleveland the "Yule-tide log" or "clog" and "yule candles" were duly burnt on Christmas Eve, the village carpenter generally supplying his customers with the first-named, the grocer with the latter. It was considered very unlucky to light either log or candle before the proper hour had arrived. Strange to say, in this part of Yorkshire, "Christmas boxes" were very uncommon. Among the Yorkshire peasantry the feast of the New Year was observed with more than mere passing notice. The first person who entered a house on New Year's Day was called "First foot," and was considered to influence the fate of the family, especially the head, for the whole year. New Year's Day in Yorkshire, and especially in Cleveland, was regarded as the time for making presents. At this period it was customary for poor widows to visit from house to house, begging for gifts. A similar custom we are told still prevails in the West Riding, where the widows ask and commonly receive at the farmers' houses a small measure of wheat. St. Stephen's Day was once usually commemorated by hunting and shooting, under the belief that the game laws were not in force upon that particular day. The good old custom of hanging up a stocking for the receipt of Christmas presents, has not yet died out in Yorkshire. Throughout the county, and formerly all over England, the various towns and villages were visited at Christmas time by "mummers," attired in garments of various shapes and sizes, with blackened faces or masks, and usually accompanied by the wooden image of a white horse. The Rev. S. Baring Gould, writing in 1866, says: "At Wakefield, and at other places, the mummers enter a house, and if it be in a foul state, they proceed to sweep the hearth, and clean the kitchen-range, humming all the time mum-m-m." At Horbury they do no sweeping now, though in olden times they used to practise it. As far as I can judge, there is generally one man in sailor's dress, the rest being women, or rather men in women's dress, but this is not universal. It is recorded by Henderson that in his day one of the commonest New Year's greetings to be met with in Cleveland was as follows:—

"I wish you a merry Christmas,
And a happy New Year;
A pantry full of roast beef,
And a barrel full of beer."

He adds that the lads of that district constantly called it through the keyholes of their neighbour's doors on New Year's morning; and also that it was recited by the children in the West Riding, when they made their rounds soliciting New Year's gifts. Ingledew informs us in his "Ballads and Songs of Yorkshire," that "Hagmena" songs were formerly sung about this time throughout the North of England generally. He gives a fragrant of that in use at Richmond, in Yorkshire:—

'To-night it is the New Year's night, to-morrow is the day,
And we are come for our right and our say;
As we used to do in old King Harry's day.
Sing fellows, sing Hagman heigh.'

Shrove Tuesday, until within recent years, continued to be marked in the villages of the West Riding by men and women playing the game of "battledore and shuttlefeathers" in the streets. Passing on to the observance of Good Friday, it may be mentioned that the incumbent of Fishlake, a village in the South-east of Yorkshire, writing in 1865, mentions that in that village, at eight o'clock on Good Friday morning, instead of the usual bell being rung as on Sundays and holy days to give notice of Morning Service, the great bell was solemnly tolled as for a death or funeral. The rector of a parish in the North Riding stated that great care is there taken not to disturb the earth in any way on Good Friday, and that it was also considered impious to use either spade, harrow, or plough. The superstition that the sun dances at its rising on the morning of Easter Day peeps out in many parts of Yorkshire; and at one time of day the maidens regularly got up to look for the Lamb and flag in the midst of the sun's disc. Harvest festivities are common to all the Northern districts, and spring from a grateful sense of the reaper's services at a season of great anxiety. The Yorkshire custom is that when on any farm the harvest is over, one of the reapers should mount a wall or bank, and proclaim its successful termination thus:—

> "Blest be the day when Christ was born,
> We've gotten mell of (——'s) corn;
> Weel bun and better shorn,
> Huzza, Huzza, Huzza."

—all present then being expected to join in the general shout. In Cleveland, we believe, what is known as the harvest "mell supper" is still kept up, though with far less ceremony than formerly. On forking the last sheaf in the harvest field the reapers usually shout in chorus these words :—

> "Weel bun and better shorn,
> Is Master (——'s) corn;
> We hev her, we hev her,
> As fast as a feather,
> Hip, hip, hurrah."

We will bring our remarks to a close with a brief notice of St Agnes Day—which according to a modern writer on the subject, was once practised throughout Yorkshire in the following manner :—"Two young girls, each desirous to dream of their future husbands, must abstain through the whole of St. Agnes Eve from eating, drinking, or speaking, and must avoid even touching their lips with their fingers. At night they are to make together their "dumb cake," so called from the rigid silence with which its manufacture is attended. The ingredients might be supplied in equal proportions by their friends, who might also take equal shares in the baking and turning of the cake, and in drawing it out of the oven. The mystic viand must next be divided into two equal portions, and each girl, taking her share, carries it upstairs, walking backwards all the time, and finally eats it and retires to rest. A damsel who duly fulfils ALL these conditions, and has also kept her thoughts all the day fixed on her weal of her husband may confidently expect to see her future husband in her dreams." W. SYDNEY, F.R.S.L.

The Salvation of Holderness.

It was during the perpetration of his atrocious desolation of Yorkshire and Durham, by our first Norman king, that this remarkable deliverance occurred.

The whilom Norman Duke, had achieved the victory of Senlac, thanks to Tosti and Hardrada at Stamford Bridge, who annihilated a portion of Harold's forces, and necessitated the remainder to hasten, by forced marches, some hundreds of miles, over roads frequently little better than sheep tracks, and through tangled forests and morasses, to fight the invader of Sussex, and his fresh and unwearied troops. The result was the death of Royal Harold, and the decisive defeat of his troops; the complete subjection of South England, and the crowning of the conqueror in Westminster Abbey. His task, however, was not yet completed; he was but king of southern and eastern Engalnd, whilst the west, and more especially the north, still maintained their independence. He then subdued the west, and eventually, but not until after a stubborn resistance by the brave Anglo-Danish population of

Northumbria,—he succeeded in bringing under his sceptre the lands lying northward of the Humber. The Northumbrians, however, jealous of foreign domination, as soon as his back was turned, took up arms in the cause of Edgar the Atheling, the heir of the old Saxon line of kings, now an exile in Scotland, which brought the Conqueror again into Northumbria to inflict another defeat on the insurgents. This occurred again and again, until at last, the Norman conqueror, swore by the splendour of God, that he would most effectually put an end to the insurrections of these pestilent and turbulent Northumbrians, by leaving none of them alive to rise against his authority for evermore, and to present a terrible example and warning to others against rebellion.

Fearfully did he carry out his threat. He was then abiding in York, the capital city of Northumbria, the death place of the Roman Emperors—Severus and Constantius,—and where Constantine the Great was first proclaimed Emperor. "Go forth," said he, to his captains, "and desolate the country from hence to Durham, sixty miles in extent ; put the people to the sword, regardless of sex or age ; burn their towns, villages, and homesteads ; destroy their cattle and crops ; and let there be nothing but death and flames and desolation between the two cities, for thus shall it be done to those who rebel against my rule."

Langtoft wrote :—

"William turned agayn and held what he had sworn,
All mad he was teyn, pasture, medow, and korne,
And slough both Fader and Sonne, some lete thei' gow,
Hors and houndes their eta, un cittis skaped non.

. . . . . .

Grete sin did William, that swilk wo did werk,
So grete vengeance he nam, of holy men of kirk,
That did no wern to him, ne no trespas,
Fro' York unto Durham no wonting stede was,
Nien yere, says my buke, lasted so grete sorrow
The Bishop Clerkes tuke their lives for two borrows.

Ordericus Vitalis says that not less than a hundred thousand persons perished in the massacre and through the subsequent famine and pestilence; and adds :—" I have no doubt in asserting that so horrid a butchery cannot pass unpunished."

Holderness is a triangular district of flat, low lying land in the south-eastern corner of Yorkshire, with the Humber for its base, the sea and the river Hull forming the two sides, with Bridlington lying a little north of the apex. In the Brigantian times it consisted of forest land, morasses, and pastures, where the Parisii, a Tuetonic colony, reared their herds of cattle. In the time of the Conqueror it was better drained, and grew oats, but not wheat ; and had, besides the two towns of Hedon and Patrington, a considerable number of villages, which, with the apperterast lands, were held by Anglian and Danish proprietors.

Westward, across the Hull, was the flourishing town of Beverley, thriving under the famous charter of King Athelstane, which secured to the burghers several valuable privileges and immunities. It owed its origin to St. John of Beverley, Archbishop of York, who founded here a monastery, and built a church, and who retired here when his episcopal duties became too laborious for his advanced age; and here he died, and was buried in his church. He was reverenced as a most holy man and a great saint, having, according to the monkish chronicles, performed some wondrous miracles both whilst living and after death; ever, even when laid in his tomb, keeping a watchful eye over the interests and welfare of his monastery and town. When the threatened devastation commenced, a detachment of murderers and incendiaries was sent eastward to lay waste the Wolds, Holderness, and the district which is now the East Riding generally. Agitated by alarm, the people hastily packed up their more portable articles of value, and fled to take refuge at Beverley; and the church was soon crowded with fugitives, praying for aid supernatural at the tomb of their popular saint, trusting that the sanctity of the place would protect them from even the ruffianism of the unscrupulous conqueror. And, indeed, so it proved, eventually, as further than Beverley southeasterly, the fury was not extended, the town and church standing on the right bank of the Hull as a bulwark of protection for Holderness.

Thus say the monkish chroniclers was it that the torrent of blood and flames was averted beneath the walls of the monastery of St. John. The soldiers had come from York by way of Pocklington and Market Weighton, slaying and plundering on their route, and leaving behind them a track of blazing villages and stacks, arriving at length in the precincts of Beverley. One party of them came hotly in pursuit of some fugitives, who had some valuable property with them; and who turned breathless into the church as a refuge. Their pursuers followed sword in hand, some on horseback, others on foot, and hesitated not to enter the sacred precincts to rob and slay the fugitives even at the foot of the altar. As they entered the church garth, they noticed a venerable old man arrayed in pontifical robes, and with golden bracelets on his wrists, who, with dignified step, passed out of the church by the open portal. This served but to excite the cupidity of the soldiers, of one, especially, hardened in sacrilege by the plunder of many a church. He urged his horse onward through the wide doorway of the church, crying out:

"Deliver up thy bracelets, Sir Priest, or die, and have thy church burnt over thy dead body." St. John, for it was none other than he, who had risen from his tomb to defend his church,—faced the intruder, crosier in hand:—"Vain and presumptuous man," said he, "thou hast dared to enter this sacred edifice on thy horse and sword in hand: this day shalt thou answer at a higher tribunal than that of thy iron-hearted king for thy sacriligeous crime." And immediately the man fell from his horse on the pavement, his body twisted into a shapless mass of deformity, and his features resembling more those of a demon than of a human being.

The terror stricken companions of the dead soldier turned back to York, and narrated to the king the occurrence, who, a slave to superstition of a certain kind, although a ruthless despoiler of churches and priests, was persuaded that this St. John must be a most potent saint, and that it would be impolitic to excite his wrath further lest his vengeance should fall upon himself personally. Hence he issued instructions that the town and monastery of Beverley should not be molested, and that all the possessions of the church and monastery should be held sacred.

The monastery held lands in not less than 25 Holderness villages, which were not touched by the hand of the ravager; and the rest of Holderness also escaped scatheless, as the destroyers dared not cross the Hull lest they should inadvertently play havock on any portion of the possessions of St. John.

In the Domesday Book, compiled some fifteen or twenty years aferwards, we find that in Yorkshire, there were found not more altogether than 35 vileins and 8 bordarü. There is a constant re-currence of entries of lands "waste," as Northallerton for instance "modo wastum est," and the greater portion is reduced in value from pounds in King Edward's time to shillings; as for instance, Easingwold reduced from £32 to 20 shillings But in Holderness, we find such entries as:—"Arram 20/- in King Edward's time: the same now; Long Riston, 30/-: the same now;" whilst just beyond the boundary to the north, the manor of Bridlington as "value in King Edward's time £32: now 8 shillings." It is true several of the villages are returned as reduced in value, and some as partially waste; but in the interior the lands had been confiscated, their Anglo-Danish proprietors reduced to serfdom, and their patrimonies granted to Normans; the seigniory, or supreme lordship being granted to the Fleming, Drogo de Beure, which will account for portions having gone out of cultivation, and the consequent lower estimate of value.

Perhaps the truth of the matter may be, that William, when at York, had heard of the holy miracle-working Saint of Beverley, and imbued, as he was, with a species of superstitous awe, a fear of incurring the vengeance of the Saint, was the reason of his giving instructions that his monastery, and its appendages should be spared.

FREDERICK ROSS, F.R.H.S.

Yorkshire Fairs and Festivals.

Annual fairs for the sale of various descriptions of merchandise are an institution of very great antiquity. As soon as our ancestors had progressed in civilisation sufficiently to desire articles which were not produced in every locality, and for which, owing to the sparseness of the population, there was not demand enough in any single town to supply the producers or manufacturers with an adequate inducement to confine their business operations to one place, they must have felt the need of yearly or half-yearly markets in the centres of population for the interchange of such products. The entire production of some commodites, as wool, for example, is limited to one period of the year ; and the demand for many descriptions of manufactured goods in any one town of England in the middle ages would not enable a dealer in them to live upon his profits, unless he carried his wares from one town to another.

Hence fairs were in their original form annual or semi-annual markets, the privilege of holding which was granted by the Crown or by the lord of the manor, in most cases, to some religious house in or near the town. To this connection with the Church may be traced the custom of holding the fair on the feast-day of the patron saint of the place. For instance, we find the Archbishop of York, at a very early period, granting to the Prior and Monks of Pontefract a charter for the holding of "a weekly market on Wednesday in the village of Barnsley, and one yearly fair to last four days, that is to say, on the eve and day of St. Michael and the two following days, with all liberties and usages to such market and fair belonging, unless this market and this fair be to the injury of other markets and fairs in the neighbourhood."

In like manner the Chester fairs were granted by Hugh Lupus, second Earl of Chester, and nephew of William I., to the Abbot of St. Werburgh, and held on the festivals of St. John and St. Werburgh; and Winchester fair, another very ancient institution, by the monarch just named to his cousin, the Bishop of Winchester, one of whose successors subsequently granted portions of the tolls to the priory of St. Swithin, the Abbey of Hyde, and the hospital of St. Mary Magdalene.

"Lee fair," held annually in August and September, though now insignificant as compared with what it was centuries ago, is still one of the most important in the West Riding. Though held at West Ardsley, its two fairs, known to horse-dealers throughout Yorkshire as "t' first Lee" and "t' latter Lee," have given their name to that part of the parish in which they are held, which is very generally known up and down the country as "Lee Fair," and to many the place is better known by that title than by it. proper name.

These fairs are of very ancient date, Mr. Batty, in a paper on the Priory of St. Oswald at Nostell, says that the canons of that place received a charter from Stephen to hold two annual fairs. It has been shown, however, in the preface to the Wakefield Mysteries, usually called the Towneley Mysteries, that the original charter was granted by Henry I., and that Stephen only confirmed it. The days for holding the two fairs are given as the Feast of the Assumption and the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, viz: the 15th of August and the 8th of September, but the fairs are now held nine days later, viz.: on the 24th of August and the 17th of September. To these two days they are now limited, but a century ago there was in reality but one fair, which lasted for three weeks, and was one of the most important horse fairs in the kingdom. Besides being celebrated for the largeness and importance of its business in horses and cattle, it was an annual market for the sale of almost every description of produce, as all the great fairs were originally, and as the great fair of Nijni Novgorod, in Russia, is at the present day. According to the testimony of the oldest inhabitant, "Lee Fair," fifty years ago, was a sight which once seen was never forgotten. Such stores of fruit, onions, &c., were to be seen nowhere else; and multitudes, it is said, came from Huddersfield, and other parts of the county, to purchase supplies of those articles.

Scatcherd derives the name of Lee from Dr. Legh, grantee of the site of Nostell Priory, in 1540. That the Legh family was connected with Ardsley is shown by Thoresby, in his pedigree of the Leghs, wherein William Legh is named as seised of lands in West Ardsley and Westerton. This person was attainted of high treason with Edward Tatterstall, a clothier, and a priest named Ambler, and was executed in 1541.

An interesting incidental notice of this fair may be found in the court-rolls of the manor of Wakefield, and from it something may be learned concerning the manners of our ancestors six hundred years ago. John of Heton, the head of a family of some importance in this part of the country, and living at Old Howley Hall, near Woodkirk, went to the fair, accompanied by his wife Anabel, and attended by his serving man, John Grafford. Indulging too freely in the beer dispensed there, he overturned the stall of William the Carter, and assaulted John of Newcastle and Alice of Scardeby, who had come from those distant places to this very celebrated fair either to sell their wares, or to provide themselves with a stock of necessaries for the winter. Anabel and Grafford seem to have participated in the disturbance, for complaints were laid against both, as well as against John of Heton. John of Newcastle claimed a hundred shillings damages for the assault, which appears to have been a violent one; and William the Carter laid his damages at forty shillings, which included 2s. 4d. for twenty gallons of beer, 1s. for a cask, eighteen-pence for a sack, and 1s. for damages done to the covering of his stall.

The fair was known at that time as Woodkirk fair, from the circumstance of it belonging to the canons of that place, and was even then one of the most famous in England. It is said that merchants came to it from France, Spain, the Netherlands, and even from Italy and Germany; and that every family of consequence, and the religious houses, for many miles round, there made their purchases of necessaries for the ensuing twelve months. A curious illustration of the manners of the period is afforded by the fact that a priest and clerk regularly attended the fair for the purpose of uniting in matrimony couples who, meeting at that scene of mirth and festivity might be desirous of entering that state.

Another curious circumstance connected with this famous old fair was that on St. Bartholomew's day, on which it ended, the scholars from the grammar schools of Leeds, Wakefield, and other places were brought to "Lee Fair" for examination, and this was done yearly down to the early part of the last century. An amusing incident connected with one of these annual gatherings is related by an old man who died about 1780, and is mentioned in Mr. W. Smith's "Old Yorkshire." He says:—"My father, when a boy, was present during a disputation, and had well-nigh been knocked on the head by a beadle, for, happening to ask one of the boys who stood up improper questions, the gentleman in gold-laced robe and cocked hat applied his truncheon so forcibly to the pericranium of the catechiser as made him remember his impudence all his life afterwards."

The fair ground is now the top and side of a hill east of the church, not far from an older site called Fair-steads field.

Another fair of this early period, but now fallen to insignificance, was that now known as Field-cock fair, concerning which Scatcherd, in his "History of Morley," says:—"In Saxon and early Norman times the church of the parish, in which Howley was situated, was at Morley, and afterwards at Batley. There are vestiges of some place of worship at Howley, and this, in all likelihood, was a mere parochial chapel, called in those days a 'field kirk,' important enough, however, to give rise to a village wake or fair, which would naturally be called Field Kirk Fair. We have also at or near to Howley a "holy well," which also was a place of annual resort. Here, then, in the vicinity of Howley, we have two religious edifices in early times,—the kirk of Batley, and the chapel or field kirk at Howley or Southwell. Can anyone doubt that there was here, in former days, a fair? Ask, then, a villager returning from the annual assemblage where he has been, and he will reply: 'I have been to Field-cock fair.' This is the only name by which it goes; but who can doubt that it is a corruption of Field Kirk Fair."

Nostell fair was granted by Henry I. to the canons of St. Oswald, Nostell, and commenced on the 3rd of August, continuing for five days. This ancient fair was surpressed by John de L'Isle, on account of the riots and disorders for which it became notorious.

The connection in early times of fairs

with the Church, to which reference has been made in the preceding pages, led to their being frequently held in churchyards. Bristol fair was an instance, and in London the ancient and now abolished fair of St. Bartholomew was originally held in the precincts of the priory in West Smithfield, dedicated to that saint. Edward I., however, prohibited the custom in 1285 by an ordinance to the effect that "The King commandeth that from henceforth neither fairs nor markets be held in churchyards, for the honour of the church," &c.

It seems probable that this custom never obtained in Barnsley, where the extensive open space still known as the Church Field afforded ample facilities for the purpose in close contiguity to the sacred edifice. The Easter Fair was probably a later institution, and in respect of this it was arranged, as in many other places, that it should be held elsewhere. May-day Green would, of course, offer itself as a very suitable locality. This open space probably acquired its name from the May-pole round which, according to tradition, the youths of Barnsley danced in former times on the 1st of May, a custom derived from the festival of Flora in the days of heathenism, when it was introduced by the Romans. James, in his romance of "Forest Days," calls it Barnsley Green, and names it as a place of sports in the time of Robin Hood; but there are no records showing either when the May-pole was set up, or when it was taken down.

York fair also dates from very remote antiquity, the city itself being one of the most ancient in the county, or even in England. Mr. S. Baring-Gould tells a good story of this fair in the second volume of his "Yorkshire Oddities, Incidents, and Strange Events." Everyone who knows York knows that the fine ruins of the Abbey of St. Mary and the hoary remains of the Priory of St. Leonard are so near each other, in the grounds of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society, that when perfect their walls must have abutted. Those who do not know this require to be acquainted with the fact in order to understand the story. Towards the close of the fifteenth century, the brethren of St. Leonard's numbered among them an unworthy brother who had taken the vows in haste—in a fit of head-ache and remorse, after "potations pottle-deep" on an occasion of civic rejoicing—and repented at leisure. The head-ache was bad, but the monastic fare of bread and herbs was worse. He longed for beef and strong ale, and in less than a year felt that he must have a jolification, if he died for it.

York fair approached, and to York fair

Brother Jucundus resolved to go. So one day, while the brethren were taking their after-dinner nap, he relieved the sleeping porter of his keys, and the sleeping Prior of a crown, and hurried away to Parliament Street, whence the confused sounds of ministrelsy and merriment had reached his ears in the refectory, and made the meagre fare more than ordinarily repulsive to him. His eyes brightened, his colour rose as he gazed delightedly at the feats of jugglers aud posturers, the highly coloured and much exaggerated pictures of giants and dwarfs, and the long row of stalls laden with gingerbread and "spice." He supplemented his poor dinner with pastry and cakes, he quaffed strong ale, he saw the shows. In the midst of his enjoyment, and when he was beginning to see double, he was confronted by two grave monks, sent by the Prior in search of their missing brother. He was obliged to return to the abbey, where, in solemn conclave, he was condemned to be walled up alive in a convenient niche in the cellar.

Just a year and a day after that fearful event, the cellarer of St. Leonard's, on going into the cellar, was startled by hearing a somewhat thick voice trolling a jovial song, apparently in the niche in which Brother Jucundus had been walled up. He listened; it was that erring brother's voice! He ran from the cellar as fast as his trembling legs would bear him, and in gasping accents told his strange story to the Prior. The reverend father pronounced it incredible; but he went down to the cellar, and all the brethren followed. The voice was still lustily singing. "A miracle!" exclaimed the Proir, and he immediately gave orders for the wall to be broken down. "A miracle!" he exclaimed again, when it was done; for there stood Brother Jucundus, alive and jolly! Now, lest my readers should be as incredulous as the Prior was until convinced by the sight of the merry monk in the flesh, the seeming miracle must be accounted for.

When Brother Jucundus became sober enough to understand the situation in which the awful sentence of the brethren had placed him, he kicked until he kicked down a portion of the wall, and, tumbling through the opening, found himself in the cellar of St. Mary's abbey. That was a cistercian foundation, in which the "silent system" was observed; and the brethren, on the appearace of Jucundus among them, asked no questions, and were content to suppose that he was a new brother, duly installed. He abode in St. Mary's unquestioned, therefore, until York fair came round again, when the old longing for a jolification returned, and as he could not gratify it by a fling in Parliament street and the Pavement, he resolved to have a booze in the cellar. There he was found, later in the day, drunk and incapable. For that offence he was walled up in the cellar, and in the same niche as before, which, it will be remembered, was in the party wall between the cellars of the two religious houses. That was how it happened ; and if any of my readers do not believe the story, they are referred to Mr. Baring-Gould.

In and around Bradford all fairs and feasts were formerly outshone and dwarfed into insignifiance by the septennial celebration of the Bishop Blaise festival. Upon what grounds this ancient saint holds a place in the ecclesiastical kalender, antiquaries are unable to say, or at all events to agree. He is said to have been Bishop of Sebaste, in Armenia, and to have been martyred under Licinius in 316. Tradition credits him with the invention of wool-combing, which is sufficient, perhaps, to account for his former reputation in this country, and especially in Yorkshire. Minshow, speaking of him in his obsolete dictionary, under the word "Hocktide," says:—"This day about Candlemas, when countrywomen go about and make goode cheere ; and if they find any of their neighbour women a spinning that day, they burne and make a fire of the distaffe, and thereof called S. Blaze his day." Dr. Percy, in his notes to the 'Northumberland Household Book,' says :

—"The anniversary of St. Blazius is the 3rd of February, where it is still the custom in many parts of England to light up fires on the hills and on St. Blayse night —a custom anciently taken up, perhaps, for no better reason than the jingling resemblance of the name to the word blaze."

A representation of this festival is given in a book about Yorkshire, published in 1814, and in which the order of the procession is set forth as follows:—"The masters, on horseback, with each a white sliver; the masters' sons, on horseback; their colours; the apprentices on horseback, in their uniforms; music; the king and queen; the royal family; their guards and attendants; Jason; the golden fleece; attendants; Bishop and chaplain; their attendants; shepherd and shepherdess; shepherd's swains; attendants, &c.; foremen and wool sorters, on horseback; combers' colours; wool combers, two and two, with wool wigs and various coloured slivers." But, though a life-size figure of Bishop Blaise may be seen at the principal entrance of the Bradford Exchange, the great septennial festivals formerly provided by the wool staplers of the town in favour of their patron saint have long ago fallen into disnetude.

It is now time to say something about the amusements of the fairs at the early period at which they had their origin.

Ancient records leave a great deal to be inferred from analogy, so far at least as any particular fair is concerned; but it may, I think, be taken for granted that what is known of fairs in other parts of the kingdom applies equally to those of Yorkshire.

There being no doubt that itinerant entertainers of the people were in the habit of tramping from town to town, and from village to village, long before the Norman Conquest of this country, there can be none that the minstrels and "gleemen"—the latter class comprising dancers, posturers, acrobats, jugglers, and exhibitors of performing bears, horses, and monkeys,—were to be found at the fairs from the earliest period. Strutt, in his well-known work on the sports and amusements of the people, gives numerous illustrations from the Harleian collection of manuscripts in the British Museum library, which constitute our chief authority as to the amusements of the fairs in the middle ages. They introduce us to acrobats and posturers performing the various feats which have been the stock-in-trade of the profession down to the present day,—to jugglers exhibiting the same feats with knives and balls as their representatives in the nineteenth century,—to performers of balancing feats, among which we find the balancing of a cart-wheel, just as it was performed some years ago by an elderly negro, in the streets of London,—to monkeys vaulting over a stretched cord, and bears and horses walking on their hind legs alone. That such freaks of nature as have had their representatives in our own time in the spotted boy, the Siamese twins, and the hairless horse had begun to be exhibited by showmen in the reign of Elizabeth, is shown by the allusion to such exhibitions made by Shakespere in "The Tempest," when the mariners discover Caliban; and the practice of displaying in front of the shows large pictures of the wonders to be seen within prevailed at the same period is distinctly alluded to by Jonson, in "The Alchymist:"—

> "What should my knave advance
> To draw this company? He hung out no banners
> Of a strange calf with five legs to be seen,
> Or a huge lobster with six claws."

When this comedy was written, the public entertainers, encouraged by the favour of the people they amused, were looking up again, after the sore depression of the Vagrancy Act of Elizabeth's reign, which scheduled strolling jugglers and minstrels with fair-going thieves, gipsy fortune-tellers and wandering beggars.

That companies of strolling players visited the fairs at the same period is shown by the prologue written for some London apprentices who, when they gave a dramatic performance in 1614, admitted their want of skill in acting and elocution in the lines—

> "We are not half so skilled as strolling players
> Who could not please here as at country fairs."

There is an entry in the household book of the Clifford family, quoted in Whitaker's "History of Craven," of the payment in 1638 of one pound to "certain itinerant players;" and two years later, an entry occurs of the payment of the like amount to "a certain company of roguish players, who represented a New Way to pay Old Debts," the adjective being used, it would seem, to distinguish the company referred to, as being unlicensed or unrecognised, from the strolling players who had permission to assume the title of some peer and to wear his livery. The Earl of Leicester maintained such a company, and several other nobles of that period did the same, the actors being known as "my Lord Leicester's company," or as the case might be, and being allowed to perform elsewhere when their services were not required by their patron.

The lesser sights of a country fair in the first quarter of the eighteenth century are graphically delineated by Gay in the character of the ballad-singer in "The Shepherd's Week," bringing before the reader's mental vision the stalls, the lotteries, the mountebanks, the tumblers, the rope-dancers, the raree-shows, the puppets, and "all the fun of the fair."

"How pedlers' stalls with glittering toys are laid,
The various fairings of the country maid.
Long silken laces hang upon the twine,
And rows of pins and amber bracelets shine.
How the tight lass knives, combs, and scizzors spies,
And looks on thimbles with designing eyes.
Of lotteries next with tuneful note he told,
Where silver spoons are won, and rings of gold·
The lads and lasses trudge the street along,
And all the fair is crowded in his song,
The mountebank now treads the stage, and sells
His pills, his balsams, and his ague-spells;
Now o'er and o'er the nimble tumbler springs,
And on the rope the venturous maiden swings.
Jack Pudding, in his party-coloured jacket,
Tosses the glove, and jokes at every packet.
Of raree-shows he sung, and Punch's feats,
Of pockets picked in crowds, and various cheats.

The fact that, even in modern times, the commercial element has always had precedence of the amusements of the fairs, in the cases in which horse and cattle fairs are held in combination with pleasure fairs, shows, however, that the former was the origin of the fairs, and the latter an incidental adjunct. Some of the earliest incidents of the Yorkshire fairs that can be gathered from old newspapers, diaries, letters, &c., relate to horse and cattle dealing, and little is found concerning shows and other amusements earlier than the second quarter of the present century. Thus, in the diary of John Hobson, of Dodworth, included in the volume of "Yorkshire Diaries and Autobiographies," issued by the Surtees Society, the only one relating to a fair is the following, made May 18th, 1730:—"Bought a pair of oxen at Rotherham fair."

Adwalton was formerly the scene of an important cattle fair, and when, in 1765, the first sheep and cattle fair was held at Wakefield the inhabitants of the former place proclaimed it illegal, and threatened actions at law "against all persons by whom such intended meetings at Wakefield shall be held," on the ground that they would be highly prejudicial to the neighbouring fairs and markets at Adwalton, which were held under royal charter.

Birstal fair or feast was enlivened in 1792 by the breaking loose of a bull that was made to contribute to the amusement of the company by being secured to a post, and baited with dogs. This was one of the popular amusements of those "good old times," which every generation assigns to a previous century. The populace did not always have the whole of the sport to themselves, however, for it sometimes happened that the bull got loose, and then he was apt to turn the table on his tormentors. On the occasion referred to, the Birstal bull chased the spectators, some of whom he drove into a pond, where they were as well drenched as they were frightened.

The beginning of the present century introduces to our notice Robert Ireland, a famous leaper, who appeared in a circus at Sheffield fair in 1802. He was a native of Yorkshire, and a tall well proportioned young man, who had been for some time travelling from fair to fair. Mr. Charles Leslie, of Slindon House, near Arundel, to whom I am indebted for this account of him, says he leaped over three men on horseback, vaulted backward and forward over a horse without the aid of a spring board, and did flights through balloons. When walking he leaped over gates and hedges for amusement or perhaps for practice. On one occasion he leaped over a loaded waggon, and on another accomplished a long jump of 23 feet. While in Sheffield, he made a wager —and won it—that he would hop, and kick with the same foot the sign of the Greyhound, in West Bar, which then projected over the causeway.

In the following year, while performing in Burslem, he kicked a bladder on a pole 20 feet high, and leaped over a coach, on the roof of which were four volunteers with shouldered muskets and fixed bayonets. He is said to have broken his neck but the year of the casualty has not been ascertained.

The next event in the history of the Yorkshire fairs of which I have been able to find any record occurred at Northallerton in 1810. Two horsedealers, Isaac Tetley, of Leeds, and a

Cheshire man, named Watkinson, were riding from that fair on the night of the 14th February, when one of them challenged the other to a race to Leeds for twenty guineas. The bet was taken, and the start made from Harewood bridge, which would make the distance nine miles. Watkinson won the wager by half a length, accomplishing the distance in twenty-six minutes and twelve seconds.

THOMAS FROST.

James Nayler, The Mad Quaker, who Claimed to be the Messiah.

History furnishes particulars of several men who have claimed to be the Messiah, and perhaps the most celebrated of the number is James Nayler, "the mad Quaker." He was born at East Ardsley, near Wakefield, in the year 1616. It is certain that his parents were in humble circumstances, and it is generally believed that his father occupied a house near the old church, and that he was a small farmer. James Nayler, for a person in his station of life, received a fairly good education. In his early manhood he was a husbandman, and resided in his native village. When about twenty-two years of age he married, as he puts it, "according to the world," and removed to Wakefield.

Shortly after his marriage, the Civil War broke out in England, and Nayler took his share in the struggle between King and Parliament. He joined, in 1641, as a private, the Parliamentarian army, and his conduct and ability gaining him advancement, he rose to the position of quarter-master under General Lambert. While in Scotland ill-health obliged him to retire from active service, and he returned home.

Nayler carefully studied the Scriptures, and was a zealous member of the Independents, worshipping at Horbury, but he left this body in disgrace. It transpired that he had been paying attentions to a married woman named Mrs. Roper, of Horbury, whose husband had been absent from her for a long period, and that she became a mother, and that Nayler was the father of the child. The Rev. Mr. Marshall, the minister of the Independents, exposed him, and took him severely to task, so that he was finally expelled from the society.

George Fox, the founder of the Society of Friends, visited Wakefield in the year 1651, and made a convert of James Nayler. Here commences the real interest of Nayler's career—a career in which there is much to deplore, but much also certainly to cause wonder. He possessed extraordinary gifts as a preacher, and impressed the people with the truth of his teaching, more especially in the North and West of England. Trouble beset him almost on every hand—trouble often caused through his own mistaken zeal and frail conduct ; but he bore his trials with a noble Christian spirit. Nayler had no sooner joined the Quakers then he commenced what he termed his travels. At the quarter-sessions held at Appleby, in 1652, he was tried and found guilty of blasphemy, and sentenced to twenty weeks' imprisonment. On being released he continued spreading his doctrines in the North. We gather from the remarks of an officer who had served under Cromwell a testimony to the power of Nayler's preaching. "After the battle of Dunbar," says the officer, "as I was riding in Scotland at the head of my troop, I observed at some distance from the road a crowd of people, and one higher than the rest; upon which I sent one of my men to see, and bring me word what was the meaning of the gathering; and seeing him ride up and stay there, without returning according to my order, I sent a second, who stayed in like manner; and then I determined to go myself. When I came thither, I found it was James Nayler preaching to the people, but with such power and reaching energy as I had not till then been witness of. I could not help staying a little, although I was afraid to stay, for fear I was made a *Quaker*, being forced to tremble at the sight of myself. I was struck with more terror by the preaching of James Nayler than I was at the battle of Dunbar, when we had nothing else to expect but to fall a prey to the swords of our enemies, without being able to help ourselves. I clearly saw the Cross of Christ to be snbmitted to, so I durst stay no longer, but got off, and carried condemnation for it in my own breast. The people there cried out against themselves, imploring mercy, a thorough change, and the whole work of salvation to be effected by them."

Nayler, in 1654, after visiting in the West, wended his way to London, and preached to two congregations which had been formed by Edward Burrough and Francis Howgil, members of the Society of Friends, who suffered imprisonment with him at Appleby. He broke up both congregations, and drew after him "some inconsiderate women."

His mind gave way, and he believed that he was the Messiah. "Notwithstanding the irregularities of Nayler's life," says Scatcherd, the learned historian of Morley, "there were many things in the man, which, with low and ignorant people, exceedingly favoured his pretensions to the Messiahship. He appeared, both as to form and feature, the perfect likeness to Jesus Christ, according to the best descriptions. His face was of the oval shape, his forehead broad, his hair auburn and long, and parted on the brow, his beard flowing, his eyes beaming with a benignant lustre, his nose of the Grecian or Caucassian order, his figure erect and majestic, his aspect sedate, his speech sententious, deliberative and grave, and his manner authoritative." Carlyle has drawn a pen picture of Nayler, but not with the skill of the foregoing.

It is not our intention to attempt to trace Nayler from place to place in his wanderings, but to touch on the more important episodes of his closing years. He visited the West in 1652 on a religious mission, and revisited it again four years later. During his visit to Cornwall, he prophesied, and subsequently one of the charges made against him was that he proclaimed himself to be a prophet. At Exeter he was charged with vagrancy, and imprisoned. During his confinement he was visited by a number of women, who had been moved by his teaching. Amongst the number was a widow named Dorcas Erbury. She fell into a swoon, and it was supposed that she was dead. Nayler went through certain ceremonies, and he pretended to have restored her to life. Referring to this when examined by the Bristol Magistrate at a later period, the woman said, "Nayler laid his hand on my head after I had been dead two days, and said, 'Dorcas, arise!' and I arose, and live, as thou seest." On being questioned if she had any witness to corroborate her statement, she said that her mother was present. The local authorities at Exeter released Nayler after detaining him for a short time. At this period some strange scenes occurred. "The usual posture of Nayler," says Scatcherd, "was sitting in a chair, while his company of men and women knelt before him. These, it appears, were very numerous and constant for whole days together. At the commencement of the service, a female stepped forth and sang:—

"This is the joyful day,
Behold! the King of righteousness is come!"

Another taking him by the hand exclaimed:—

"Rise up, my love—my dove—and come away,
Why sittest thou among the pots."

Then, putting his hand upon her mouth, she sunk upon the ground before him, the auditory vociferating:—

"Holy, holy, holy, to the Almighty."

His procession through Chepstow caused much amazement in that quiet place. "Nayler" is described as being mounted on the back of a horse or mule;—one Woodcock preceded him bareheaded, and on foot;—a female on each side of Nayler, held his bridle; many spread garments in his way,—while the women sang: "Hosannah to the Son of David—blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord—Hosannah in the highest!"

Nayler and his followers entered Bristol in a procession similar to the one just described. We are told that on this particular day in the year of grace 1656 when he visited the city of Bristol, rain was falling, and the roads were deep with mud, but neither mud nor rain could check the ardour of himself and disciples, and they sang hymns of praise. They first wended their steps to the High Cross, and then to the White Hart, Broad-street, where a couple of Quakers were staying. The local magistrates were soon on the alert, and had the party apprehended and cast into prison. After being examined by Bristol magistrates, Nayler and his followers were sent to London to be examined before Parliament. His examination and the debate on it occupied many days, and the members finally resolved "that James Nayler was guilty of horrid blasphemy, and that he was a grand impostor and seducer of the people;" and his sentence was, "that he should be set on the pillory, in the Palace Yard, Westminster, during the space of two hours, on Thursday next, and be whipped by the hangman through the streets from Westminster to the Old Exchange, London; and there, likewise, he should be set on the pillory, with his head in the pillory, for the space of two hours, between the hours of eleven and one, on Saturday next, in each place wearing a paper containing an inscription of his crimes; and that at the Old Exchange his tongue should be bored through with a hot iron, and that he should be there also stigmatised in the forehead with the letter B; and that he should be afterwards sent to Bristol, to be conveyed into and through the city on horseback, with his face backwards, and there also should be whipped the next market-day after he came thither; and that thence he should be committed to prison in Bridewell, London, and there be restrained from the society of all people, and there to labour hard till he should be released by Parliament; and during that time he should be debarred the use of pen, ink and paper, and he should have no relief but what he earned by his daily labour." This terrible sentence was duly carried out, although Parliament and Cromwell were petitioned to mitigate the punishment. During his imprisonment he wrote his recantation in letters addressed to the Quakers. After being confined for two years he was set at liberty, and repaired to Bristol, and at a public meeting made a confession of his offence and fall. His address moved nearly all present to tears. The Quakers once more received him back to their Society.

His end came in the year 1660. In that year he left London for Wakefield, but failed to reach it. At Holm, near King's Rippon, Huntingdonshire, one night he was bound and robbed, and left in a field, where he was found by a countryman. He was removed to a house at Holm and every attention paid to him, but he soon died from the results of the rough treatment he had received at the hands of the highwaymen.

WILLIAM ANDREWS, F.R.H.S.

Duke Richard's Doom: A Legend of Sandal Castle.

The castle of Sandal was under close leaguer, for Margaret of Anjou, Lord Clifford, and the followers of the Lancastrian chivalry were arrayed in arms against Richard, Duke of York, whose claim to the throne of England had been approved by the ordeal of battle, when the red rose of Lancaster was trampled in the blood and dust of Northampton field, on the 20th July, 1460.

Five months had barely elapsed since that evil day, but the triumph of York had been confirmed by the solemn decision of Parliament; and it was decreed that, when Henry VI. passed from the stage of life, the house of York should assume orb and sceptre *maugre* the kingly paternity of Edward, Prince of Wales.

Margaret of Anjou felt her bosom stir with the mother and the queen, as she heard the news of the great disaster that ruined the house of Lancaster. Animated by the most implacable hatred towards York, the queen received with the utmost disdain his peremptory summons to repair to London, but prepared to meet him in the field, and again appeal to the god of battle.

So, as that fated year drew towards its close, Northumbria gleamed with arms, and its wild breezes displayed the emblazoned banners of Northumberland, Clifford, Neville, and Dacre, as the Lancastrians took the field with bow and bill. More eager for the battlefield than for the reversion of the crown and robe that decked the puppit king, Henry of Windsor, Richard carried his banner northward, to find his enemies too strong for the small but valiant army that marched at his back. In this strait he threw himself into his castle of Sandal, where he proposed to await the arrival of reinforcements under Edward Earl of March.

The fortress was crowded with armed men; and outside, the army of Queen Margaret held it under close observation.

On the 29th of December, Duke Richard sat in council with his noble friends and officers, who, however, united to dissuade him from the rash step of engaging the enemy. Strangely enough, Richard came to the resolution to fight, and many speculations have been advanced to account for this decision, almost unparalelled in its rashness. It has been suggested that a scarcity of provisions compelled him to assume the defensive; that Margaret taunted him by the most insulting challenges, and that she deceived him by concealing the numbers of her troops, availing herself, it is supposed, of some small hillocks, and by the woods that then girded the stronghold, excepting the open space in the direction of Wakefield.

The military ardour and high courage of Duke Richard were probably the real incitements to the desperate encounter. Be that as it may, on the morning of the 24th of December, York, having completed his preparations for battle, threw open the gates, lowered the drawbridge, and displayed to the incensed Lancastrians his insulting banner, with its proud device of a Falcon volant argent, with a fetterlock Or. The noble bird was represented with expanded wing, attempting to break open the lock, which was presumed to typify the crown of England. Duke Richard was nobly supported as he issued forth to fight his last battle, and the Falcon shook its wings over the crests of the Earl of Salisbury, Sir Thomas Neville, Sir David Hall, Sir John Parr, Sir John Mortimer, Sir Hugh Mortimer, Sir Walter Limbrike, Sir John Gedding, Sir Eustace Wentworth, Sir Guy Harrington, and many other brave gentlemen and famous men-at-arms, the whole army consisting of not more than 6,000 men.

With trumpets sounding, and the van flashing with steel, and gay with fluttering pennons, the chivalrous army burst upon the Lancastrians that stood in arms before the castle, and the sudden clash of arms and battle shouts of York and Lancaster rang over the field. Fierce and bloody was the conflict; but the Lancastrians were broken, and their bravest hewn down, before the onset of York, but while sword, and lance, and mace were in full play, the main body of Queen Margaret's army came marching up from Sandal Common, the fierce Lord Clifford urging on the van, impatient to bathe his weapons in the blood of the Yorkists, and deliver his soul of the dreadful vow that he had made to cut off the house of York, root and branch, in requital for his father's loss, who had fallen, with Somerset and Northumberland, fighting at St. Alban's, under the banner of King Henry.

In that hour the bravest warriors in England met face to face, inflamed by mutual hatred, and as the battle was hand to hand, the archers probably played but a subordinate part in the bloody conflict that ensued.

No slackness was found on either side, and York was no doubt soon cut off from the castle, as the Lancastrians drew up, thousand after thousand, and on every side the doomed Yorkists found swords and lances flashing in their faces. Now all the heroic courage of Duke Richard was exerted to maintain the field, and lances were flung aside, as sword, and mace, axe, and dagger, performed their murderous work. Hot with the certainty of triumph and revenge, the Lancastrians shrank not from the mighty strokes of the despairing Yorkists, who soon found that no prospect of victory or retreat remained to them; and we may be sure that Duke Richard found full employment for his arms, as Queen Margaret's cavaliers directed their attacks against him; and soon his mail gaped with many a rent, where practised warriors had found and probed a joint with keen sword, or gashed the tempered steel with crashing blow of axe or falchion. Gallantly the heroes fought it out to the bloody end; cleaving and shearing with the terrible two-handed swords; smashing helms and iron skull-caps by sheer force of weighty mace; gashing good mail with the tempered battle-axe, and heaping the field with dead and dying men.

Pennons and banners fluttered in the December wind; hoarse war-cries resounded o'er the field; loudly rang out the trumpets of the royalists, and heavier fell the strokes of Clifford as he urged the battle-surges against the struggling bands of York. The wounds of the Duke, although they did not daunt his own courageous soul, operated upon the courage of his followers, and a panic began to spread through their decimated ranks, as Clifford drew his lines closer round them and beat a bloody way into their ranks wherever a gap appeared, until the little army was cleft through and through, and the sword was raised, not in chivalrous conflict, but vengeful massacre. York fell, and with him the flower of his army.

So insatiable was Clifford in his pursuit of vengeance, that, on overtaking the Duke's son—a mere youth,—who had left the castle accompanied by his tutor, he put him to death with his own hands, although the youth fell upon his knees, in his earnest supplication for mercy. But Clifford's bloody oath was on his lips as he plunged the cold steel into the lads' heart:—"As thy father slew mine, so will I slay thee and all thy kin."

Over two thousand Yorkists perished on Wakefield Green; and the noblest of the prisoners were condemned to the block by the sanguinary Margaret; and, among the rest, the veteran Salisbury. It is recorded, by Welhamstede, a contemporary writer, that York was captured in the field, and there beheaded. It is certain, however, that his body was subjected to the axe, and we can easily believe the story of Clifford bearing the Duke's head at point of spear into the Queen's presence, and that the worthy couple exposed it on Micklegate Bar, at York. So perished Duke Richard of York, in the fiftieth year of his age, in the last hours of the sad, eventful year of 1460.

EDWARD LAMPLOUGH.

Obsolete Industries of the East Riding.

The discovery of coal and the application of steam power to machinery have localised and concentrated some manufactures which were once widely diffused. Not many generations ago nearly every house was a factory, in which the spinning wheel, and in some instances the hand-loom also, played an important part. Railways have practically annihilated distance between the manufacturing towns and the rural villages, but when there was little or no communication between these places, each community was compelled to produce within itself the necessary articles of food and wearing apparel. Hence the use of the picturesque, but fast-disappearing windmill, is nearly abandoned, and the almost forgotten sound of the whirring spinning-wheel, and the click of the hand-loom are entirely things of the past.

Before the country was so well drained, there were many districts where flax or lin could be grown; but now the flax industry is nearly, if not altogether, a thing of the past, though Holme-on-

Spalding-Moor, Winestead, Patrington, Sunk Island, and the Lowlands at Broomfleet and Gilberdike, once produced enormous quantities. After the reaping of the lin, it was steeped in water, to decompose the woody portion, and when this offensive work was completed, the lin was heckled and swingled, and the fibrous portion spun into fine thread, during the long winter evenings, by the female members of the family. We retain the memory of this occupation in our word spinster—literally a female spinner, but now applied to unmarried females generally ; so webster was a female webber, or weaver, but now a proper personal name ; and litster (Lister) was a female dyer.

As every house could not well have a hand-loom, there would be in each community one or more weavers who would be fully occupied in making up the linen yarn into sheets, table cloths, bed hangings, bed tickings, or towels, and the woollen yarn into coarse but warm and serviceable frieze, and other rough cloths ; while a combination of the two—a linen warp and woollen weft—produced linsey woolsey—a material much approved for dresses.

I have before me the indenture of apprenticeship of James Fairbotham, of Nafferton, who was bound for twelve years to Richard Billingham, of East Lutton, in order to be "taught, learned, and informed in the Trade, Art, Mistory [*sic*], and Occupation of a Weaver." Whatever "mistory" there was in the weaver's occupation, they certainly produced a good article, free from starch, whiting, or shoddy. Their linen goods were made to wear, not to sell; and were not at all like the cotton goods which Manchester now supplies to the nomadic tribes of Africa. When a parcel reaches them, the nearest river is soon filled with a milky fluid, caused by the washing out of the calico all the thickening and stiffness, which prevent the simple natives dyeing it with their brilliant reds, blues, or yellows. Although the above-mentioned James Fairbotham terminated his apprenticeship in February, 1794, there are still in use linen bed-furniture, ticking, and sheets, which he wove, when master weaver at Nafferton.

The last of the linen weavers in Driffield was "Jossy" Barnett, who had sufficient work to employ two or three looms in his own house, now No. 1, Chapel Lane. The very mention of his name brings a smile on the faces of those who knew him. So guileless, so peculiar, so pleasant! His slim, trim figure, his white neck-cloth, his tall hat, knee breeches, and ever-smiling face, were well known throughout the district, and the memory of him is pleasant to this day. When his elderly mother hawked the produce of her son's loom, she used a donkey and panniers to carry her wares; but Joseph carried his pack on his back, and dearly loved a crack of talk, during which he imparted all the news of the district he had travelled, and received in return that which would interest his customers in the next village. Like many others of his trade, he was a staunch Methodist, and was for many years Superintendent of the Driffield Wesleyan Sunday School, in conjunction with the late venerable Mr. Edward Hayes.

The last of the linen weavers at Welton was John Bentley, who was also a Methodist and a class leader. At South Cave, poor deformed Willie Lockey, the butt of the thoughtless and ignorant, was the last to ply the shuttle there.

Though some of the bleaching might be done at home, yet bleaching was a trade which had a home at Beverley, where were three or four extensive bleaching yards. Some of these, though covered with houses, shops, and streets, are still called the Bleach Yards. There used to be a bleach yard near Mulberry Cottage, at Driffield.

Carpet weaving was once an important industry in the East Riding. Where there was an abundance of water power, it was utilised for other purposes than for flour mills only. The large flour mills of Mr. Wilson, of Wansford, now occupy the site of a similar building, which was burnt down, and which had been a carpet factory. I have seen carpets woven there which, for design, colour, and material, will compare favourably with carpets made to-day. There used to be a large carpet mill at Boynton, which employed hundreds of hands; while at Driffield, Bell Mill flour mill was once an extensive woollen spinning mill, and previous to that a paper mill. It was then called the factory, and the lane leading to it is still called Factory Lane. In Middle Street, Driffield, where the York Union Bank now stands, once stood a carpet weaver's shop, kept by a man named Hillaby; and

> "Children, coming home from school,
> Looked in at the open door,"

with that curiosity which impels them to watch the progress of any mechanical work that happens to be in their way.

Mr. Thos. Holderness writes: "Perhaps the last survivor of the journeyman weavers in Bridlington was old Jimmy Welbourn. Jimmy was a little, thin, wiry, old man, with knee breeches and ribbed stockings, and wore a very long frock coat, of primitive cut. He could read but could not write, and was particularly fond of studying a large illustrated edition of "Cooalpepper Yahbley Beuk" (Culpepper's Herbal). He was a firm believer in astrology. This made him a skilful disciple of old Culpepper, for he was always very particular to gather his "yerbs" when certain planets were in certain positions, as he believed that they would otherwise not possess their desired medicinal properties. Ignorant and superstitious as the old man was, he must have had remarkable arithmetical and mathemathical abilities, for a friend once set him the question: "If a pope could pray a soul out of purgatory in an hour, a cardinal in two hours, an archbishop in three hours, and a bishop in four hours, how long would it take them to do it, if they all prayed together?" The old man set his whole soul on the task, and some time after went to his young friend, and said: "Ah've deean it!" His friend looked at Jimmy's paper and said: "Why, Jimmy, what are all these?" "Figures," answered Jimmy. "Figures? Do you call these figures?" "Yes," responded Jimmy; for, being ignorant of figures, he had invented a set of his own, and with these nondescript signs had correctly solved the problem."

These weavers and spinners would require reels and other wooden articles, and in order to supply them, a Mr. Mark Laybourne built a wood-turning mill, on the beck down Albion Street, Driffield, to be worked by water power. It is now used as a flour mill, and is known as Witty's Flour Mill.

Captain Edward Anderson, in his poem, "The Sailor," thus describes those days that are gone by:

"My clothing then it mostly was home-spun;
My stockings did my mother's taste display,
Black and white wool she mixed to make them gray,
But then the richest woman in the town
Would go to church in linsey-woolsey gown.

* * * * * *

On Yorkshire Wolds we mostly barley eat,
For there they grow but very little wheat;
We lived on barley bread, and barley pies,
And oats and peas the want of wheat supplies."

Steam and machinery have made it easier to buy new articles rather than repair old ones. A skilled workman will sometimes tell you that he cannot mend an article except at a cost greater than the cost of a new one; and as woollen clothes can be obtained for little money, leather breeches making is a thing of the past. Brogues, they used to be called; and though the thing is obsolete, you may yet hear an old country tailor use the term for trousers. The Blue-coat children in Beverley used to wear leather breeches; and the famous Danish chieftain, Ragnar Lodbrog, got his nickname, Lodbrog (Leather Breeches), from a pair he made to protect his legs in his fabled conflict with the dragon.

Leather gloves for hedgers and ditchers are still made at Little Driffield, and sold in large quantities, but the industry is not so thriving as in olden times before kid and woollen gloves were introduced.

The discovery of coal abolished the use of cazzons for fuel. The cazzons were formed of cow's dung, which was taken up fresh, and *cast* against a wall. When dry, it was easily detached, and if burnt with wood and chalk formed an excellent fire, giving much heat and little smoke.

Before the days of Bryant and May, in the days when the flint and steel and the tinder box were the agents for procuring a light, the boys and men of the family made matches, which were used for obtaining a blaze after the necessary glow had been obtained by the tinder. A soft piece of wood was obtained, and cut, within half an inch of the end, into thin slips, not severed from each other. The bundle was dipped into a solution of brimstone, and the matches broken off as required. Sometimes the spells (slips) were cut off, and dipped at each end, so that when one end had been used to obtain the required blaze, the lighted match could be blown out, and the other end reserved for another occasion. These matches, being separate, were long and thin; and gave rise to the saying, applied to a thin person:—"He's as fat as a match dipped at both ends."

At Paull, near Hull, was once an extensive dockyard, where ship-building was largely carried on. In May, 1812, *The Anson*, a 74 gun ship, was built here, at a cost of £140,000.

The whale fishery connected with Hull was a most important local industry, seeing that the average annual value of the oil, which the whalers brought from 1772 to 1852, was nearly £65,000; or, including the value of the bone, over £85,000. During the same eighty years, an annual average of 1,070 sailors went aboard the Hull whalers, bound for the Northern seas. The vessels intended for this service were strengthened externally by iron plates, and internally by strong stanchions and cross bars, so as to resist the nipping of the ice. The departure of the whalers was a time of great excitement, for nearly all the inhabitants were connected with some one or other interested in the success of the fishery, and the piers and quays were crowded with people, who cheered the crews and wished them God-speed. And when they returned, the bells rang and people hurrahed and crowded the streets to do honour to their brave townsmen, who endured such hardships, and faced such danger, in the exercise of their calling. Yes! when the ship came in there was much rejoicing.

The oil was used for domestic lighting, and, throughout the Riding, may still be seen the jaw-bones of whales used as gate-posts, relics of the whaling industry of

Hull, whose merchants, in 1618, had Jan Magen Island granted to them by King James, as a base of operations for their special pursuit.

JNO. NICHOLSON.

Bolton Abbey : Its History and Legends.

"This hoary pile subdued by outrage and decay."

Of all the grey and ancient buildings which dot the swelling uplands and smiling valleys of our land a larger number probably date their origin to the hundred years following the battle of Hastings, than to any of the succeeding centuries. In addition to the large number of religious edifices planned and commenced during this period, the turbulent reign of Stephen, the last of the Norman Kings, gave rise to numerous buildings of a far different character. The barons, taking advantage of the distracted state of the country, built strong castles, and from these levied black mail on their weaker neighbours. The old Saxon Chronicler says: "When the castles were finished they filled them with devils and evil men. Then they took those whom they suspected to have any goods, putting both men and women in prison for their gold and silver, and torturing them with pains unspeakable. They robbed the monks and the clergy, and every man plundered his neighbour as much as he could. Such, indeed was the misery that it was said openly that Christ and His Saints slept."

It was during this period of confusion and misrule, in 1151, three years before Stephen's death, that Bolton Abbey was established on the banks of the Wharfe. Three other Yorkshire Abbeys—Jervaux, Fountains, and Kirkstall, date from nearly the same year.

After William the Conqueror had subdued our country he gave vast estates to his chief followers. In this way a large extent of land in the Craven district of Yorkshire came into the hands of Robert de Romille, a Norman baron, who built for himself a castle at Skipton. His daughter and heiress, Cecily, married one William de Meschines, and some years after, in 1120, founded and endowed a priory for Canons Regular of the Order of St. Augustine. The site of the foundation was the village of Embsay, two miles east of Skipton. In 1151 the priory was transferred to Bolton, by Alice, daughter of the Lady Cecily, who had married a nephew of David, King of Scotland. Why the change was made is not exactly known. It may have been to place the Abbey in a pleasanter situation, and one less exposed to pillage during the incursions of the Scots. Legend asserts, however, that the translation took place owing to the only son of Lady Alice de Romille being drowned by accident in the Wharfe, about a mile distant.

As time passed on the influence and worldly possessions of the establishment increased apace, until, in 1199, we find the Canons owning property bringing in a yearly rental equal to £2,800 of our money. A few years later, we are told, there were belonging to the Abbey over 2000 sheep and oxen. One hundred husbandmen were employed on the estate, while thirty other servants of a higher grade were occupied as bakers, smiths, &c., within the building. There were in addition several hundreds of slaves, who did the menial work and received no wages, but coarse food and raiment. Twenty of them were in the service of the prior who ruled the establishment which, in its most prosperous days, comprised not less than 1000 persons, including the prior, fifteen canons, gentlemen dependents, servants, and slaves.

By their rules the Augustinians enjoyed a freer life than other monks. It is said they were well shod, well clad, and well fed. The latter we can readily believe on reading over the huge quantities of meat, flour, game, cheese, ale, &c., which the Bolton Canons consumed in twelve months. Landseer, in his painting "Bolton Abbey in the Olden Time," calls prominent attention to this side of monastery life. The foreground of his picture is taken up by the huntsman, and his son bringing in a fat deer and other game. In the doorway stands the prior in white cassock, his portly figure in itself suggestive of the lines—

> "The monks made good kale (broth)
> On Fridays when they fasted."

We may say generally of the English monasteries that as their wealth increased their usefulness decreased. "It is difficult," says the proverb, "to carry a full cup without spilling," and so we find that, as the income of their houses grew larger, the monks became more prone to sloth and self indulgence. There is no reason to doubt that Bolton Abbey shared in the general degeneration.

In consequence of these changes, the orders of Henry VIII., in 1536 and 1539, for the suppression of the monasteries, caused little real loss to the country. Bolton was given up to Henry's commissioners, on January 29th, 1540. The deed of surrender is still preserved in the British Museum. It was signed by Prior Moone, and the fourteen canons then in the Abbey, and gives many particulars of the property. The Estate was granted at a low price to Henry Clifford, Earl of Cumberland, and from him descended to the Dukes of Devonshire, to whom Bolton woods now belong.

When the monastery was broken up,

every thing of value that was saleable was removed. Even the lead was stripped from the roofs and melted down into pigs and fodders, to add a few pounds to the proceeds, from such work of destruction. Every part was wrecked excepting the nave, which has continued in use as a Parish Church. In a short time most of what had been so fair and comely was reduced to a ruin.

"To winds abandoned and the prying stars."

During the three hundred and more of years which have since elapsed, some of the walls have almost disappeared. Other parts, upon which

"Old Time hath laid more lenient touches"

yet remain, focussing the interest in one of the most charming of English valleys, inspiring the pencil of the painter and the pen of the poet, and affording at once an object of interest and contemplation to all whose mind dwells ever so slightly on the past history of our land.

The scenery all along the upper Wharfe is singularly beautiful, and especially around the Abbey, assumes a most romantic character. Bolton, indeed, owes most of its present interest, not to the skill of its builders nor to the energy of its priors, but to its picturesque surroundings, bestowed so lavishly by "Auld Nature" herself.

When Prior Moone was called upon to

resign his charge in 1539, he was engaged in building a fine tower at the western end of the Abbey church. This tower, though never finished, still remains the most noticeable feature of the building. It is in the Perpendicular style, and three of the buttresses are curiously ornamented with dogs, carved possibly in allusion to the office of Master Forester, which Prior Moone held to the Clifford family. Passing under this western tower we come to the original front, whose lancet windows and clustered shafts betoken the Early English style. The church has thus now two west fronts, with two hundred and fifty years between their dates of building, and in this respect holds an almost unique position in architectural annals.

The nave, which has only one aisle, has beeen converted into a neat place of worship, suited for present day needs. Under the Chantry, which formerly existed at the east end of the north aisle, was the burial vault of the Claphams of Beamsley Hall, who are said to have been buried unpright. Wordsworth, in "The White Doe of Rylstone," thus refers to the legend—

> "Pass, pass, who will yon chantry door
> And through the chink in the fractured floor,
> Look down and see a griesly sight,
> A vault where the bodies are buried upright."

On the south side of the nave may be seen a gallery by which the monks reached the church from their dormitory. Mass was sometimes celebrated at midnight, and there were frequent early morning services. On these occasions the monks would pass from their sleeping apartments to the church without coming into the open air.

Nothing remains now of the central tower but the arches which supported it, while portions of crumbling wall, wreathed with masses of luxuriant ivy, mark the extent of the two transepts. At the foot of the one remaining wall in the south transept was found a slab with the epitaph, "Hic jacet d'n's Chrofer Wod quo'd'm P'or." Christopher Wood was the eighteenth prior of Bolton, and died 1483. Did he, like Browning's bishop, fight "with tooth and nail" to save this spot for himself?

Did he think here to

> "lie through centuries
> And hear the blessed mutter of the mass
> And see God made and eaten all day long.
> And feel the steady candle flame, and taste
> Good strong thick stupifying incense smoke"?

As was usual in the building of large churches, the chancel was probably the first part commenced, although this and other portions were afterwards rebuilt in the Decorated Style. This rebuilding may have been necessary, owing to the damage done by the Scots when they pillaged the priory in 1316 and 1320.

A specimen of the ornamentation of the first chancel yet exists in an arcade of round, intersecting arches, running along the lower part of each side wall. Under this arcade were nineteen seats on each side, for the use of the canons during the services. On the south side, close by where the high altar once stood, are the remains of a piscina and four sedilia. The latter were stone seats used by the officiating priests during mass. They are rarely found quadruple as at Bolton. The graceful foliated tracery of the windows has nearly all disappeared, and it is difficult now to imagine the scene which would here have met the eye in past days of grand religious ceremony.

As was usually the case, the Bolton monks, appreciating the warmth of a genial sun, arranged their own apartments on the south or sheltered side of the church. Few traces, however, remain of their dormitory, refectory, or other offices.

The consecrated ground on the north side is still used for burials. The object of most interest is a Cross, erected in memory of the late Lord Frederick Cavendish. It bears the inscription :

To the beloved memory of
LORD FREDERICK CHARLES CAVENDISH,
born 1836.
He went out as Chief Secretary to Ireland
"Full of love to that country,
Full of hope for her future,

Full of capacity to render her service,
and was murdered
in the Phoenix Park, Dublin,
within twelve hours of his arrival
May 6th, 1882.
"The Lord grant thee thy heart's desire
And fulfil all thy mind."

Connected with the Churchyard is the touching legend of "The White Doe of Rylstone," retold by Wordsworth in his "Fate of the Nortons." The Nortons lived at Rylstone, and the father and eight sons were condemned for joining the "Rising of the North," in Elizabeth's reign.

Before their execution at York, they committed to the care of the eldest son, who had not joined the rebellion, their banner to lay on the altar of Bolton Abbey. He, however, was pursued and slain in the Wharfe valley, and his body buried in the priory graveyard. The only survivor of the family, a sorrowing sister, frequently visited his grave, accompanied by a milk-white doe, which had become her constant companion. When death, soon after, ended the sufferings of the unhappy maiden, the doe continued for long to haunt their favourite spots, especially the grave in the priory churchyard.

A mile further up the river, amongst the most charming woodland scenery, is the Strid or Stride. Here for some fifty yards the river runs through a narrow rift in the gritstone rock, only five or six feet wide. It is possible to spring across, but a slip or false step would lead to certain death, in the foaming torrent beneath. Tradition says that the only son of the Lady Alice de Romille, in attempting this feat, was swept away, and that in memory of his death, the mother transferred the priory from Embsay to Bolton. The legend attracted the fancy of Wordsworth and Samuel Rogers, and was versified by both. The former, in his poem, "The Force of Prayer," thus relates the story :—

Young Romilly, through Barden woods,
Is ranging high and low,
And holds a greyhound in a leash
To let slip upon buck and doe.

The pair have reached that fearful chasm.
How tempting to bestride,
The lordly Wharfe is there pent in
With rocks on either side.

He sprang in glee—for what cared he
That the river was strong and the rocks were steep
But the greyhound in the leash hung back,
And checked him in his leap.

The boy is in the arms of Wharf,
And strangled by a merciless force ;
For never more was young Romilly seen
Till he rose a lifeless corse.

'What is good for a bootless bene ?'(irreparable loss)
The falconer to the lady said.
And she made answer "Endless sorrow,"
For she knew that her son was dead.

She knew it by the falconer's words
And from the look of the falconer's eye,
And from the love which was in her soul
For her youthful Romilly.

Long, long in darkness did she sit,
And her first words were, "Let there be
In Bolton, on the field of Wharf,
A stately priory."

The stately priory was reared,
And Wharf, as he moved along,
To matins joined a mournful voice,
Nor failed at even-song.

ALFRED CHAMBERLAIN, B.A.

To Bolton Abbey.

By Rev. E. G. Charlesworth.

Though sadder to poetic ears
Thine ancient river song appears
Than when it passed thee days of yore
Majestic in thy youthful years,
Thy ruin makes more dear its shore,
More dear the trees, the flowers, the sky,
More dear all things unto thee nigh.

A full moon in ascent to-night
That saw thy glory at full height,
Hath sent to thee a tender ray
My fancy christens—"Pity's light."

In earth thy broken walls enclose
*Is dust of noblest of my race,
Famous in war and in the chase
When to full bloom spread York's white
rose.

A vision in my spirit swells,
A love that feels the touch of pain,
A prayer that fades into complain ;
Thou art not in thy youth again.

*See Wordsworth's "Claphams and Mauleverers."

And yet I seem with inner ear
As if the olden times had come,
To hear the music of thy bells,
Breeze-blown from their whole-tower-home

To hear their lowering tones as night
Grows to the time of final prayer,
Lowering and lowering until low
Like whispers in a summer air.

Their speech of peace above the world,
Their speech of death that will be gain
Of quiet joy if born of pain,
Greater alway than is the pain.

My prayer that faded lives again
As with an inner eye I seem
To see lamps burning in thine aisles,
And I forget it is a dream.

Stay rainbow-bridge 'twixt now and then
For much on thy far side I see,
And much on it more loved by me
Than latter shapes of things and men.

For, faith now dead in every way,
Love, thinks her end will come with death,
Grown cold, what wonder if she saith
"Do things love which but live a day."

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